

Christianity and Society

Evangelism and Social Doctrine

Alexander Miller

A Century of Anglican Social Thought

Ronald Preston

The Historical Roots of European Nihilism

Karl Lowith

The Spiritual Need of the Modern Age

Ralph Read



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CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIETY

A Quarterly devoted to Christianity and Social Reconstruction
PUBLISHED BY THE FELLOWSHIP OF SOCIALIST CHRISTIANS

ANNUAL FELLOWSHIP MEETING

The annual meeting of the Fellowship of Socialist Christians will be held on September 20-21.

The program will consist of the following main items:

1. Discussion of the political and religious situation in Britain and America, led by R. Niebuhr. This part of the program is prompted by Mr. Niebuhr's recent visit to Britain.
2. Discussion of the effect of Catholic and Protestant influences upon peace-making. We hope this will be led by Pierre van Paassen and Paul Tillich.
3. Discussion and revision of the revised statement of the principles of the Fellowship as published in the last issue of Christianity and Society. Members are asked to bring this issue of the journal with them.

We believe that this revised statement will present the Fellowship with new opportunities of becoming a rallying center of social Christianity.

Members are asked to interest sympathetic friends in this fall meeting.

We are not yet certain of the place of the meeting. Members will be notified immediately after Labor Day.

EDITOR

REINHOLD NIEBUHR

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EDITORIALS

The Bombing of Germany

THE bombing of the great industrial region of the Ruhr valley has raised some interesting religious and moral problems in both Britain and America. When one estimates the destruction in Britain and then reflects that four to ten times as many bombs are raining on the Ruhr region, one is able to envisage the terrible destruction which is being wrought in Germany.

It was significant that while the newspapers, and sometimes the Broadcasting Corporation seemed to gloat over the "revenge" which American and British planes now exacted for the destruction in Britain, common people both in Britain and America had the decency to feel and express sorrow over the necessity of this terrible measure of war. A simple old elevator operator in a London hotel, touchingly observed to the writer: "I don't care what the newspapers say; I think the bombing of those cities is terrible, however necessary." A young student at Oxford, product of the Christian Student movement, and preparing for service in the Royal Air Force declared: "I have written to the BBC (radio) to protest against its gloating announcements. I will probably do some bombing myself; but I will take no satisfaction in the human misery it causes."

It is natural of course for those who

are inclined to pacifism to declare that those of us who support this war prove the untenability of our position by this moral embarrassment and discomfiture. For the bombing of cities is a vivid revelation of the whole moral ambiguity of warfare. It is not possible to defeat a foe without causing innocent people to suffer with the guilty. It is not possible to engage in any act of collective opposition to collective evil without involving the innocent with the guilty. It is not possible to move in history without becoming tainted with guilt.

Even the most righteous political cause is tainted with antecedent, concomitant and consequent guilt. Every "righteous" national or political cause is partly guilty of the evil against which it contends. That is its antecedent guilt. It involves itself in the evil of causing suffering to the innocent. That is the concomitant guilt of its enterprise. It will also be unable to remain untainted of subsequent guilt; for it will most certainly corrupt the virtue of its victory by egoistic and vindictive passions. There is no escape from guilt in history. This is the religious fact which St. Paul understood so well and which is so frequently not understood by moralistic versions of the Christian faith.

Once bombing has been developed as an instrument of warfare, it is not pos-

sible to disavow its use without capitulating to the foe who refuses to disavow it. No man has the moral freedom to escape from these hard and cruel necessities of history. Yet it is possible to express the freedom of man over the necessities of history. We can do these things without rancor or self-righteousness. It has been reported by both American and British authorities that pilots of bombing planes, professing the Christian faith, have sometimes refused to take communion before their perilous trips. This hesitancy does credit to their conscience. They ought on the other hand to be helped to understand that the Lord's Supper is not a sacrament for the righteous but for sinners; and that it mediates the mercy of God not only to those who repent of the sins they have done perversely but also to those who repent of the sins in which they are involved inexorably by reason of their service to a "just cause."

The Kingdom of God, of which the Sacrament is the symbol, is on the one hand the peace which comes to the soul when it turns from sin to righteousness. It is on the other hand the peace of divine forgiveness, mediated to the contrite sinner who knows that it is not in his power to live a sinless life on earth.

Roosevelt and the New Deal

The dissolution of the Bureau of Economic Warfare which represented the only remaining liberal and "New Deal" governmental department in a once liberal administration, raises some serious questions about Roosevelt's future as America's liberal leader. The liberal side of the administration has been retreating steadily under the impact of the war. The great administrative agencies are all more or less in the hands of

"dollar a year" men. Leon Henderson's dismissal from the Office of Price Administration this past spring has made the OPA a football of rival pressure groups. In contrast to the scrupulously impartial food administration in Britain under Lord Woolton, our price administration has become increasingly political and conservative.

After Henderson's dismissal only Wallace and Milo Perkins were left to hold the fort against the rising tide of reaction in Washington. The President's ostensibly impartial castigation of both Wallace and Jesse Jones is one of the most dubious bits of political strategy in his whole political career. It is dubious first of all because it seeks to cover up the President's own obvious administrative weakness. For years he has allowed two rival policies to develop in the same or in contiguous departments; and has chosen between the two policies from time to time, sometime giving the one and then the other the advantage. In the case of the Bureau of Economic Warfare, it was organized to carry out "New Deal" policies in opposition to a more conservative line by the State Department on the one hand and by Jesse Jones' Reconstruction Finance Corporation on the other.

But for the past year Roosevelt has consistently favored the two conservative departments in his decisions until Vice President Wallace was driven by desperation into a public attack upon Jesse Jones. The President countered this move by reprimanding both Jones and Wallace for their failure to come to an agreement. But his action completely destroyed Wallace's department and left Jones with considerably more than half of his powers. There is therefore a two-fold dishonesty in the President's course.

Everything that has occurred in Washington in the past two years, reaching its climax in Wallace's dismissal, reveals the Roosevelt administration as moving steadily to the right, confounding its friends and seeking vainly to appease its enemies. Meanwhile the campaign for the fourth term continues to gather momentum surreptitiously and there is not the slightest hope that the conservatives will move over to Roosevelt's side. The best that he can do is to gain the support of the conservative Southern democrats, whose influence in the administration is best symbolized by Secretary Hull's authority and James Byrnes' rising prestige. Some months ago it seemed that no Republican could possibly defeat Roosevelt. Now it appears that a man like Willkie will have a very good prospect of doing so.

Of the original support behind Roosevelt the farmer's are lost and labor is divided. Strangely enough the most radical part of the labor movement in the CIO becomes more and more unequivocally devoted to the President as he moves toward the right. Phillip Murray and his whole organization share one touching characteristic with Vice-President Wallace. The more he favors their foes in day to day policy, the more they celebrate him as the great liberal leader of America. Meanwhile there is a possibility that the more conservative AFL, particularly if John L. Lewis should be admitted into the organization, will favor the Republican cause. This will leave Roosevelt with nothing but conservative southerners, the northern democratic municipal machines and the CIO in his support.

Obviously the Republicans would have a very good chance of defeating this combination. While Willkie would prob-

ably be even more conservative than Mr. Roosevelt in domestic policy and while his victory might lead to the paradoxical result of sweeping many isolationist-Republicans into congress, there would be certain advantages in a Willkie victory. One is that the principle of international responsibility in foreign policy would cease to be a monopoly of the democratic party and be the accepted policy of both parties. The other is that a Willkie victory in 1944 would obviate a more reactionary type of Republican victory in 1948. A reactionary victory in 1948 is almost a foregone conclusion if a tired and very ambiguous New Deal is given a new lease of life in 1944, primarily because the war is still on.

This does not mean that we ought to support Willkie in the coming election. He may not even be nominated. The Republicans may be too ignorant and blind to nominate the one person who could defeat Roosevelt. All that is clear at the moment is that the Roosevelt administration has become too equivocal in both its foreign and domestic policy to be regarded as a hopeful instrument of the liberal cause.

Roosevelt has been a great President in more ways than one. He has gone further in progressive domestic policy than any previous President; and he understood the international crisis better than practically any other public man. But his great achievements of the past cannot hide the sorry realities of his present administration.

Rationing and Food Subsidies

There is no more marked contrast between British and American domestic life than the frictionless harmony with which the rationing system works in Britain in comparison with our own ineffective sys-

tem and the push and pull of special interest groups against what is valid in our system. Some of the difference is one in public temper and derives from the fact that Britain is deeper in the war than we are and therefore more ready to sacrifice private interest and convenience to the public weal.

But difference is also caused by the fact that the British decided at the very beginning that they would close the gap between the food grower and the food consumer by national subsidies to the former. In Britain the government buys all food and resells it at prices calculated to keep the food price structure absolutely stable. In America congress was able to prevent the administration from following a similar policy. Furthermore the farmers in America have an inordinate political representation in the Senate against labors complete lack of representation. In consequence, congressional, particularly senatorial, raids upon the price structure in the interest of food growers has periodically destroyed the stability of food prices and placed labor at a disadvantage. It was this lack of stability which made John L. Lewis' rebellion against the administration possible.

It now seems probable that the administration will be able to enact a complete food subsidy plan in the fall. It is doubtful however whether it can "roll prices back." That is a very difficult achievement. The best that can probably be done now is to hold prices at their present level.

Christianity and Politics in Britain

The difference between the political scene in Britain and America is so great in many respects that comparisons are almost impossible. The Roosevelt ad-

ministration is ostensibly a liberal one, while Churchill's national government is conservative. Yet labour has a significant position in Churchill's government, while it is fighting a desperate rearguard action in Washington. No labour leader or progressive has a position in Washington, comparable to Bevin's eminence as "manpower" dictator, Herbert Morrison's influence as Home Secretary or Sir Stafford Cripps' as minister of aircraft production. Lord Woolton's food administration is furthermore a more genuine instrument of democratic justice than anything we have in Washington.

The relation of socially radical Christian thought to politics in Britain corresponds to this totally different British situation. American Christian radicalism may be more consistently radical than any similar British thought; but it is much more irresponsible and much less relevant to the actual political situation. The British Council of Churches, for instance, came out in unequivocal support of the Beveridge social security plan. No corresponding religious group in America could support the report of the "National Resources Planning Board." The political distance between various groups both inside and outside the church is much wider in America than in Britain.

This fact is symbolized most perfectly by the position of Dr. Temple, the Archbishop of Canterbury in British life. It is doubtful whether the Church of England has ever had a more advanced proponent of social justice as its Primate. There is no religious position in America comparable to his influence.

Yet the occupants of much less influential posts of leadership could not take his advanced position on social and political matters without creating serious divisions in their organization.

This is not to suggest that Dr. Temple can count on unanimous support in his advocacy of a social order in which property interests are completely subordinated to the requirements of the community. There are members of the Church of England who regard his political pronouncements with apprehension. It may also be noted that certain Free Church groups, among whom bourgeois perspectives are more powerful than in the established church, are quite openly critical of Dr. Temple's politics. Nevertheless he commands a very wide support. Some of that support is derived from the prestige which his great office confers upon its occupant, whoever he may be. Some of it is derived from his personal prestige as the leading theologian of the Church of England. These two forms of prestige combine in such a way that one may never be quite certain whether it is because the Archbishop of Canterbury is speaking or because Dr. Temple is speaking that his words are given a special degree of respect and sympathy.

Yet neither the prestige of the office nor the influence of the man could account altogether for Archbishop Temple's ability to speak for the conscience of England with a degree of support not accorded anyone else in so advanced a position. That is due to the fact that Britain has a wider measure of agreement upon basic social and political issues than any other modern nation. American equalitarians are prone to think of England as a land of class distinctions; and it must be admitted that social distinctions are still greater than in our own country. But Americans do not always understand that the same feudal tradition which is responsible for class distinctions is also responsible for a political philosophy which finds nothing abhor-

rent in the political control of economic processes. Thus the right and the left meet across the chasm of bourgeois liberalism. The left wing Tories under the leadership of Quentin Hogg are actually projecting a degree of socialization of property which would strike terror into the heart of a typical American conservative-liberal.

This does not mean that Britain is a radical nation. It was able, as no other modern nation, to weld the virtues of bourgeois democracy upon the older feudal-monarchical world; and it may succeed again in relating the best values of the workers' rebellion against the injustices of a capitalistic society to the present society, without destroying the fabric of historical continuity. Britain has the most secure and least catastrophic future of any modern nation.

The defect of this virtue is that she may well maintain many forms of capitalistic injustice because of her ability to mitigate them more successfully than other nations. There is little prospect of a triumph of the labour party. The labour party lacks a strong will-to-power and the trade union mass of the party is jealous of any of the more political and radical middle class leaders who emerge in it from time to time. This jealousy of Sir Stafford Cripps was apparent in the past. It is apparent now in the attitude toward its most promising leader, Herbert Morrison. The latter is of working class origin but he belongs to the political, rather than trade union, section of the party. If anyone is to lead the party to triumph it will be Morrison. But there is little prospect of such a triumph in the next decade.

In the field of religious radicalism the genuine achievements of national unity have the same tendency to dull the edge

of a religiously inspired protest against injustice. The quasi-Catholicism of Anglicanism naturally brings the problems of human society into the orbit of religious piety in ways difficult for more individualistic Protestants to understand. A part of the Anglican church is of course as conservative as Catholic social thought. The village church may still be intimately wedded to the squierarchy. But Anglican parishes in the cities are frequently intimately related to the life of the workers.

There is, however, no fully developed and unified socially radical movement. The Industrial Christian Fellowship, which was responsible for Malvern has the defect of being purely Anglican and not drawing the very considerable Free Church social radicalism into partnership with it. It is moreover not too rigorous in analysing the actual realities of the social struggle and frequently speaks in moralistic accents, reminiscent of our own older "social gospel."

It may be observed incidentally that there is a curious hiatus between Christian social theory and social experience in Britain. If one meets with any group of "radical" clergymen one finds them capable of making the most rigorous and shrewdest possible analysis of the social and political forces at play in a given situation. But most English social pronouncements seem to be taken from the pages of our old "social gospel." They seem to suggest that a "Christian" society need merely substitute the "service" motive for the "profit" one. Meanwhile every intelligent British proponent of the social meaning of the Christian faith understands quite well that politics, on any possible level, must check and channel egoistic impulses as well as harness and extend the altruistic ones. It is

understood also that no conceivable "Christian" society can abolish the tensions of conflicting interests and perspectives. But the pronouncements are remarkably Pelagian and seem to envisage a frictionless society of perfect human brotherhood. This curious inconsistency in British religious thought is not unrelated to a similar aspect of British political life in general; for British political art has always been shrewder in weighing the realities of a given political situation than political science has been in stating the principles by which the realities must be interpreted.

The socially advanced portion of the British churches is in need of a unified movement through which the common testimonies of that part of the church will be clearly stated and which will exploit in more explicit terms the general atmosphere of social advance created by the Archbishop of Canterbury's leadership.

It ought to be mentioned that Sir Richard Acland's new Commonwealth party is interesting from the Christian standpoint because Acland's own position is derived from Christian presuppositions. Others in the movement have arrived at a common position with him from other backgrounds. Tom Wintringham is a former communist. Acland, who has given up his ancestral estates and now makes a precarious living, is a most appealing figure. He stands in a long line of British radicals who represent the left wing of the Christian tradition. From Gerrard Winstanley, the leader of the "Diggers" in the seventeenth century through, Keir Hardie, Robert Smillie, Arthur Henderson, George Lansbury, Stafford Cripps and Acland in the past decades, British Christianity, whether sectarian or state

church, has generated prophets of religious social criticism. In other words the moral protest against the injustices of our society is derived from, and need not express itself against, the Christian religion. This one fact makes Britain unique in modern social history. For all the radical movements of the continent have been anti-Christian. In America they are not anti-Christian but they are predominantly secular. It may be that the unbroken character of the Christian ethos in Britain is also the cause of the unbroken character of the socio-political history since 1688.

The Possibility of a Durable Peace

One of the most tragic aspects of this war is that it offers little prospects of anything more than a negative justification in the sight of God and history. Nazi tyranny had to be defeated. There are certain crises of evil in history in which we are forced to move against a threatening evil without too much regard for the ultimate consequences of our action. If the whole world had not been finally aroused against Nazi tyranny, it would have lived for decades in slavery. On the other hand the very fact that it was not aroused to this peril until each nation in turn became the victim of tyranny, proves that we did not understand the deeper meaning of this war. We did not understand that the peril of tyranny grew out of the soil of anarchy: the anarchy of our irresponsibility toward each other. The children of darkness are wiser in their generation than the children of light. The Nazis understood the global character of this war long before the so-called democratic nations understood it. They knew that they would have to conquer the world if they were to preserve their conquest of the

continent. We did not know that until the Nazis proved it to us.

It now appears that, though we have learned many things about the character of life and history from this war, the nations are not likely to learn enough to build a secure peace. We are not fully conscious of the depth and breadth of the world revolution in which we stand.

The problem of the peace after the war may be divided into two aspects. The one is the creation of a durable world order. The other is the development of justice within the new system of order. Order will have to maintain for some time to come by the organization of preponderant power. There is no other way of overcoming the anarchy of rival national sovereignties. Justice can be achieved within this system of order only if and as the nations which control the preponderant power have the conscience and imagination to set up constitutional instruments which will guarantee the weaker nations their just rights.

It is not altogether surprising that there is some prospect of achieving the first goal; but little prospect of achieving the second in any adequate measure. For the first merely requires that each of the powerful nations understand that it has become impossible for any one nation, no matter how powerful, to control the world's economic and political life. The second requires a degree of imagination and self-abnegation of which the powerful nations do not yet seem capable.

There is some possibility that Britain, America, China and Russia may preserve and extend the mutual relations which the urgencies of the war have forced upon them. It is not at all certain that they will achieve this end; but there is a possibility of it. It is not certain because each of these nations has impulses toward

solitary dominion; and some of them (particularly America and Russia) have tendencies toward isolationist irresponsibility, which must be overcome before a stable alliance between them can be formed. Of the four nations Great Britain is prompted by geographic circumstances and political experience to espouse the cause of mutual security with fewer reservations than any of the other nations. It is not tempted to the isolationist alternative at all; because that would quite obviously mean suicide. It has some temptation in the direction of solitary dominion. That expresses itself in ideas such as the possibility of extending the "British Commonwealth" idea until all nations would be included in it. Obviously there is no possibility of arriving at a real partnership between Russia, Britain and America, merely by extending the scope of the British Commonwealth. While there are such ideas in British political thought today, they are generally not held in authoritative circles. On the whole Britain holds the promise of playing a creative role in forming a genuine alliance of the larger powers.

It must be observed that such an alliance would degenerate into nothing more than a new global balance of power if Britain merely became the broker between the other powers. We must have a direct and intimate relation with Russia and must not depend upon Britain to act as broker between us. But at best Britain will have a special function in the alliance because she will be closer to each of the other partners than either is to the other.

The organization of preponderant power represents tremendous difficulties; and we may therefore fail in achieving it. It is, however, significant that both Britain and America (and probably

Russia also) know that the basis of world order must be laid, not in some abstract world constitution which will not really engage the sense of responsibility of the large powers, but in a partnership of power. Power and responsibility must be made commensurate in the new world order, in a way the League of Nations was unable to accomplish.

When we move from this aspect of our problem to the second one: the use of order for the achievement of justice, we have less reason to be hopeful. There is little indication that any of the larger powers are thinking significantly on how their combined power is to be used for the achievement of Justice. There is little prospect of their arriving in time at a basic agreement on how either the continent of Europe or the Pacific region should be reorganized. Russia is intransigent on the acquisition of a vast strategic area, stretching from the Black Sea to Finland. Whether she could be beguiled from this venture in unilateral security, if the other powers had a really creative plan for the reorganization of the continent, is an open question. She will at best, be unable to overcome her mistrust of the Anglo-Saxon, capitalistic world completely.

There are ominous rumours that she would like to persuade Poland to compensate herself for the loss of the Polish Ukraine to Russia by the acquisition of Eastern Prussia. If this happens there will be small prospect of bringing Germany into a wholesome relationship with a continental community of nations.

The general preoccupation in the western world with the problem of what kind of punishment should be meted out to Germany, reveals how little the depth of our crisis is understood. The German problem is, in all conscience a perplexing

one. The corruption of German life by Nazism has been deep and wide and the dynamic and demonic evil of German Nazism will not yield to some simple prophylaxis. Nevertheless this evil must be understood against the background of the continent's static corruption. If Germany suffers from cancer, France suffers from consumption. Germany must ultimately be related to a healthy continent; and the continent itself can not be healthy without a wholesome German political life. This can certainly not be achieved by punishment alone.

It may be observed that the nice calculations of how much or how little Germany ought to be punished are in obvious violation of the Scriptural injunction: "Vengeance is mine. I will repay, saith the Lord." Obviously the moral, political and economic bankruptcy which Germany will face in the hour of her defeat represents a more terrible punishment than anything in our power to add or subtract.

Nor are there any indications that the western powers will allow the socialization of property to which it would naturally be prompted by its poverty and by the socialization which has already taken place under a war economy. It is much more likely that abortive efforts will be made to undo what the war has done; and thereby to lose the chance of creating a property system upon the continent which would give a new unity and health to its economic life.

It is probably, moreover, that irrelevant political sovereignties will be maintained just as much as irrelevant economic authorities. The small nations have been promised the return of their independence. If they get no more than that they will not have it long. They ought rather to be persuaded and forced

into a Council of Europe in which there would be perfect cultural autonomy for each nation but something less than absolute independence, either politically, or economically.

We may count it as a gain since the last war that the nations understand the historical process of the coalescence of power and authority. But there is little significant thought in high places in either Britain or America about the way this power is to be used. There is wide apprehension in Britain lest American power be expressed in purely reactionary and imperialistic terms. But Britain's best insurance against such an eventuality would be a generous plan of continental and Pacific rehabilitation, for which she would ask our support. So far there is little evidence of such a plan.

If Britain and America are not careful we will waste our time and spiritual substance in repenting of each other's sins. British liberalism will express abhorrence of the tendency toward economic imperialism in American politics and our liberalism will profess itself morally affronted by British political dominion in all parts of the world.

Britain will have the preponderant political power in the world after the war and we will have the preponderant economic power. The possibilities are that Russia may surpass both of us in both forms of power within the next century. The important problem for each of the great nations is to use this power responsibly, neither withdrawing from the world nor yet seeking to dominate the world alone. The important problem for all the great nations in partnership is to relate the smaller nations to this preponderant power by such constitutional means that the injustice of power will be checked and a system of

justice be developed inside of the system of order created by their power.

There is at present little prospect of such developments. Unless we do better

than now seems probable, the world is still far from finding a stable and secure peace.



EDITORIAL NOTES

This issue of the journal is delayed by the editor's three months absence on a preaching and lecturing tour in Britain. The content of the journal partly reflects this visit by the attention paid to British and Anglo-American problems.

* * *

We were glad to find some very loyal friends of our little quarterly in Britain. Our former British representative, Alan Richardson has become Canon of Durham and his place on the staff of the Student Christian Movement has been taken by Ronald Preston. Mr. Preston has kindly consented to follow Mr. Richardson also in acting as our representative in Britain. He will accept subscriptions and also send out renewal notices.

* * *

The fall conference of our Fellowship which is announced on the cover page

of this issue ought to prove of special significance because we will consider the revision of our statement of principles, recently prepared by Professor Mollegan. Members who cannot attend the meeting are urged to send criticisms and suggestions by mail. If you have mislaid the last issue of our journal in which this revision appeared please write us for a mimeographed copy. We hope that members will bring interested and sympathetic friends to the meeting. The revision of the statement gives us a much broader basis. The new statement expresses the growing conviction of our Fellowship that we must qualify our divergence from Marxist doctrine more explicitly than we have done in the past. We must continue to stand for the socialization of property wherever private property is a hindrance to justice. But we must not regard socialization as either a form of ultimate redemption from sin nor yet as a complete guarantee of social justice.

EVANGELISM AND SOCIAL DOCTRINE

By ALEXANDER MILLER

THE Church in Britain is in process of losing two defineable groups—groups which in a measure have been under its influence until this present generation—and it is losing them for avoidable reasons, not simply because the faith is difficult to believe and obey, which would be true in any age.

The two groups I have in mind are, first, the younger intellectuals of sincerity and real social concern; and second, the better type of artisan and industrial worker, even those remnants which until recently acknowledged some church allegiance. I believe that this double disaster is at least in part due to a single cause, the failure to develop a social doctrine which would be adequate to interpret to these two groups their own contemporary situation in Christian terms.

The Revolutionary Intellectual

Take the intellectuals first. Those I am concerned about have been nurtured in the Church, often in the best type of Christian home, children of office-bearers, having absorbed in Sunday-School, Bible Class and Church youth groups—and often during years of full membership—all that we have to teach them about the content of the Christian understanding of life. Their homes are places of integrity, where loyalty is given to the Church and whose internal and immediate external relationships are governed by Christian standards. Yet these young people time and time again are being lost to the Church, not because they fall

away to indifferentism and slackness, but because they drive their human concern and compassion to a deeper level, and begin to take account of the problems of social and industrial life. Again and again such folk come and say that they are leaving the Church, either to go to the Communist Party or in some other affiliation to take a militant hand in social revolution. They know that a revolutionary situation is developing for Western Europe through and beyond the war; and they propose to have a hand in the settlement, and to see that it is settled right. They know that even the elements of social order and freedom are threatened, whatever the military issue of the war, by the potentialities of reaction, and they propose to take whatever methods are historically necessary to see that the progressive forces win. In the face of incipient reaction they are of the "poor men" for whom Oliver Cromwell spoke in his day when he said: "Vote it as you will, sirs: there are certain poor men here who will shed the last drop of their blood before it is settled so."

The sadly significant thing is that in people who share this mood there is often an implicit assumption that to take a militant hand in the social struggle involves virtual excommunication from the Church; that it is impossible to wage such a struggle and retain a living association with the Church as now constituted. To them Christianity means one or other of two things. Either it is to be identified with the present Church

set-up, with its statesmanlike equivocations and its local compromises; or else it means, should it rise to its own heroic profession, a Tolstoyan idealism which would "take the teaching of Jesus seriously" and which could have neither a part in the war nor any militant part in the social struggle. The latter they are prepared to respect but would reject it as politically irrelevant: for the former they have no respect at all. We may complain that this is a naive oversimplification and that they ought to take account of the complexities of the Church's problem. They on their part feel the urgent pressure of the situation and will not take time to understand the roots of our present compromises.

The Industrial Worker

The corresponding situation with the artisan and industrial worker is that they discover the pressure of social events in their own bodies, in an intensely personal way. They may not feel the weight of the large-scale problems of society, but they do feel the weight of the struggle for survival. They too understand the Church to teach—those of them who have listened to its testimony at all—that men ought each to bear the burdens of the other and not to please themselves, that men are brothers together as children of the same Father, and that this Christian view of life is not a matter only for the sanctuary and the Sunday, but also for the workshop and the weekday. This commends itself to their hearts, but with their minds and their essential integrity they rebel. If they live in industrial districts or in dock areas they know how bitter were the experiences of the slump years. They had to fight their mates for jobs: they had to catch the foreman's eye or stand him a drink, and if they did get a job their mate was out,

and his need might be greater than theirs. Yet success in that struggle was the price of survival in decency for themselves and their families, and they fought like hell. Often when they did get work it was shameful, shoddy work. "Jerry-built" house to catch the fleeting housing boom, or equally nasty furniture to be sold on the time-payment plan and to fall to pieces before it was paid for. From this dismal alternation they have been lifted to temporary security only to be plunged into the business of making war, and they fear that after this war they may be back at the old jungle fight for survival, with every man's hand against his neighbour and the odds heavily against them all. It is to men in this situation that the Church speaks in its genial way about "the application of Christian principles to the whole of life," of "the intimate connection between religion and the work of everyday," of "bringing together work and worship." To some it sounds phoney, especially from the lips of a sheltered professional caste of ministers; to others it sounds fine but bewilderingly fails to work out. Some of the best of them, in an instinctive revulsion from hypocrisy, leave the Church. They would say that the stuff you hear on Sundays is alright for pensioners or parsons, or for women who can keep to the house, but that talk about mutual love and consideration for others is out of place in this kind of world. They won't go on going to Church on Sunday and pretend to believe things they are forced to deny in practice from Monday to Saturday. It is worth insisting again that it is the *best* of our folk who tend to react this way.

In the typical factory the articulate people are not the Churchmen: they tend rather to be shiftier and obscure and in-

effective. The articulate people are the secular radicals on the one hand; on the other hand the pietistic Christians, who are not tongue-tied because the complexities of industrial practice mean nothing to them. They make no shoddy pretence of "applying Christian principles" to industry, or of doing anything except practise a puritan piety of a detached and socially-innocuous kind.

The Freedom of the Word

We have failed the intellectual and we have failed the artisan: and at the same point. We have failed to get it over to them—even to young people nurtured in our Church homes and schools—that there is an organism of Christian truth which provides insights adequate for their problem, and a perspective which interprets to them their own situation. For the dilemma which in its different forms confronts each of them is the age-old problem of life in two worlds, of Christian obligation in the secular order, of the Law which goes along with the Gospel, and the effort after justice which is not the negation of love but its veritable expression. Middleton Murray's demand at Malvern is not being met:

"I remain convinced that the mere attempt to apply Christian principles to the existing social order is simply productive of illusion. Moreover, it brings Christian principles into contempt.

". . . to feel one's impotence is an essentially Christian experience. I am at least prepared to believe it. But if it is so, I think the Church should proclaim it. It should speak to our condition; make us feel that it has travelled through the waste places where our spirits dwell."

Murray's own resolution of the contradiction is a radical divorcement of Christians from the daemonic pressures

of modern industrialism, and the recovery of freedom and vocation in self-subsistent communities on the land. If we reject that, manifestly we must teach the intellectual once again that so far from his impulse after justice implying excommunication from the Church, he may do battle against inequity and reaction in the name of God and in the strength of the Christian fellowship: and we must teach the artisan that he can recover his vocation once again, but only by participating in active struggle against conditions of work and alternating idleness which affront his status as a man and refuse him the right to glorify God in the service of his fellows.

The Reformation principle of the freedom of the Word of God is denied, not only when the State formally prescribes free preaching, but when social and economic pressures make it unnecessarily costly for men to hear and obey.

The Theological Situation

Somewhere there lies the core of the problem of evangelism. To meet it what resources can the churches command and how far are they mobilized?

The prevailing emphasis in social doctrine derives from the liberal impulse which is still dominant in all representative Church activity. The Malvern Report is coloured by it, and it crystallizes in the Ten Points (though the first five were promulgated by the Pope they were found very congenial by British Churchmen). The biblical insights of the Oxford Conference section on the economic and industrial order have not been absorbed into the consciousness of the Church leadership or into the content of preaching. The general line of the Religion and Life Movement is to some extent bound to follow the average of

church opinion, so that it tends to deal in idealistic generalizations which are scarcely distinguishable from a moderately progressive and liberal line. They neither interpret the deep conflicts which produced the war and may wreck the peace, nor do they provide adequate criteria by which men may determine immediate choices in the industrial and political field.

In reaction against all this there is a revival of neo-orthodox and biblical theology which alarms the liberals, partly for good reasons and partly for bad. It is a frank challenge to optimistic liberal assumptions in the name of a biblical starting-point and an expository method—and it is concerned to give full weight to the Scriptural account of man's situation. It sharply distinguishes the Kingdom of God from the kingdoms of this world, no matter how closely these latter may approximate to justice, and it looks to a final judgment on history rather than to a progressive triumph of the good cause within it. All that is unacceptable to optimistic liberalism and on that score their alarm is inevitable.

On the other hand, the liberal antagonism to the new emphasis is given unnecessary excuse by two factors:

1. Biblical realism is not pessimistic, still less is it cynical about social possibilities: yet often it is made to appear so under the new emphasis. Sometimes the anti-liberal view is presented in such a way as to cut the nerve of social effort, or to discredit the reality of historical achievement in terms of justice. For example, Christian judgment of the Soviet Union is distorted by an unbiblical pessimism as often as by "progressive" identification of the Soviet system with the Christian objective. The Christian "realist" tends to insist that the secular

basis of the Russian society must mean its collapse in a longer or shorter time, and tends also to give a priori credence to the evidence for corruption and tyranny. (The liberal distortion on the other hand tends to deny any corruption or tyranny, and to ascribe Communist achievements to "unconscious Christianity".) What does not appear with any clarity is that biblical realism is neither optimistic nor pessimistic about man's historical possibilities. It enjoys a positive endeavour after justice and counts such an endeavour acceptable to God even where His Name is not acknowledged. It is not taken by surprise by the precariousness of man's social building, but neither will it cynically prophecy its failure. What it will insist is that no matter what approximation to justice men may achieve, man's life consisteth not in the abundance of his social possession in prosperity, stability, freedom and peace, but in the knowledge of God in Jesus Christ. So that while the blessing of God rests upon sound social building, it does not diminish in the least the urgency of Gospel preaching, both to sustain and to fulfil it.

2. There is a further ground of liberal antagonism due to a plain misunderstanding. The liberals tend to assume that to talk of two realms—the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world, the distinctive spheres of Church and State—and to discriminate between love and justice, is to break the cherished unity of all existence, to divide life into compartments and to land once more in a detached piety and an otherworldly religion. Clearly there is a danger of that kind; but the contention of this article is that in point of fact harm is now being done to social understanding and men are being lost to positive Christian

social activity by failure to use the biblical antitheses and by the shallowness of the liberal analysis, which confuses the Church and the secular order and assumes that by loving one's neighbour one can either by-pass justice or achieve it on the way. That kind of superficiality unnecessarily alienates the social realist and panders to the reactionaries. Churchly conservatives like nothing better than to frame resolutions which talk about "applying Christian principles" and "embodying the principles of love and mutual consideration in industrial relations." What they dislike intensely is a plain statement of the demands of Divine

justice and the requirements of the biblical Law.

Justice is not a violation of love; it is love operative "at a distance," in the complexities of large-scale society and in the relatively impersonal relations of political and economic life. To discriminate between the City of God and the cities of this world is not to divorce them, but to focus sharply the problem of how those who are citizens of the Eternal Town can fulfil their calling in Coventry. To divide Church and State is not to propose an ultimate separation, but to emphasize the rule of God over both, and His plain will for both.



A CENTURY OF ANGLICAN SOCIAL THOUGHT

By RONALD PRESTON

A CONSIDERATION of the social thought and influence of Christianity, and especially of the Church of England in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is apt to lead to a feeling of discouragement; it is difficult not to agree with the verdict of Dean Carpenter "The churchman of the period was good at the private virtues, but weak in public spirit, except in so far as that was aroused for his nation against other nations, for his social class against other social classes, for the prosperity of his church against non-conformity or unbelief. The comparative apathy of the average churchman in social matters at this time was an unhappy failure. . . ." ¹ The result is plain to see in our big industrial cities. It is the absence, except on a minute scale, of vital contact between the church and ordinary working folk; the unreflective majority of them are indifferent and the better informed minority are hostile.

There are two main reasons for this failure. One is the decay and eventual loss, from the time of Laud, of the Christian tradition on social matters. Modern historical studies, particularly those of Professor Tawney, ² have shown that the Reformation made no break in the unsuccessful attempts of church leaders to apply traditional Christian social teaching; Laud was in the succession of Latimer as a conservative reformer trying to put the clock back. Neither of them would come to terms with the bourgeois revolution. But the alliance

of the landed aristocracy with merchant capital which defeated Charles I, brought back Charles II, established William III and the Bank of England, and governed England until well after the Reform Bill of 1832, was too strong to pay attention to a Christian social tradition which had become increasingly fossilized and irrelevant. It quietly died out. Inadequate Christian social teaching was succeeded by none at all. Christian virtues were preached in a purely personal context. The desire for wealth changed, to quote Tawney "from a perilous, if natural frailty, into the idol of philosophers and the mainspring of society." ² Consequently the church had no weapons to deal with the strange phenomena of the Industrial Revolution, to tame the new social processes which had no sense of responsibility to the community, and above all to capture the loyalty of the rapidly growing proletariat of the new industrial cities.

The second reason is that the Church of England was a class church; the church of the land and trade combination which governed the country; hence the bitter opposition of the Church of England clergy to the Reform Bill. The State connection and the title combined to reinforce the class associations of the clergy with the rural gentry. This continued far into the nineteenth century and is not extinct today. As a result of these conditions the church was always behind events rather than interpreting and partly controlling them. Indeed it was not

until the Oecumenical conference at Oxford in 1937 that church thought could be said to have caught up. We may pause to notice in passing that Non-conformity has not been in much better case. It became predominantly the Church of industrial capitalism and a backbone of the liberal party. Non-conformists used their political influence largely to fight the Establishment, advocating the extension of the franchise to this end. "Thereby they helped to open the doors to millions of voters who had quite other ends in view than the exclusion of dogmatic religion from schools, or the wholesale closing of public houses."³ Both Church and Chapel are now left high and dry; no longer able to influence affairs through the governing classes, and remote from the lives of nine out of ten weekly wage-earners. It is our task to sketch how this has come about, with particular reference to the Church of England remembering that almost everything to be recorded refers to the thought and activities of middle and upper class people, for they were the effective church folk.

Just over a century ago there were roughly the same three schools of thought in the church that there are today. In 1830 the Evangelicals were a fashionable success but without the popular backing of Methodism. In John Wesley the seeds of reaction and reform had lain together, for he had no coherent social theory; Methodism rapidly took the reactionary alternative and Anglican Evangelicals did likewise. They were anti-democratic, individualist, convinced that the world was under the control of the Evil One and lost. They called men to renounce it for another and future world, and the renunciation involved not only sin, but new ideas, beauty and learning

as well. Resignation was the key virtue in this life. They had a horror of atheism which blinded them to any good in the popular movements of the non-church wage-earners from the French Revolution to Chartism, the same horror which prevented most Christians from a rational consideration of the U. S. S. R. in our own times. However, they were in fact more reforming than their conservative theory would lead one to expect; the efforts of Wilberforce over the slave trade and Hannah More with her schools in the Mendips, are well known; so are those of Shaftesbury in connection with ragged schools, chimney sweeps, public health and the struggle for the Ten Hours Bill, which lasted from 1831 to 1847. Justification by faith had to bear fruit in good works; wealth demanded responsible stewardship. But "such noble achievements were rather raids into the realm of Satan to strike evil a splendid blow, but to be followed by a retreat behind the frontiers of the elect."⁴ Westcott remarked on Shaftesbury's death that he wished he could have left theology alone. Clearly there was no Christian social teaching to come from these quarters, nor has there been from that day to this. Shorn of its fundamentalist setting, the same individualistic teaching can be heard in Evangelical circles today.

The early Tractarians were not in much better case, though their seed has borne greater fruit in their successors. Professor Raven has summed up their contribution with the words, "when the cry of the oppressed was ringing in men's ears and when Christians might have listened to the prophets of social righteousness or to the victims of social evil, fifty years were wasted in lawsuits over regeneration and ritual, vestments and

incense, and the precise meaning of 16th Century rubrics,"⁷⁵ and it is difficult to deny the substantial justice of the charge. Their positive contribution was to stress the uniqueness of the Church, as a divine community able to speak with authority, in some sense over against the secular world. Unfortunately their dazzling vision of the church never came beyond the church porch, and the realm of social and political affairs remained as alien and hostile to them as it was to the Evangelicals. Their community life was in-drawn, with its eyes on the past, nourished by an almost magical view of the sacraments from which the social content was quite missing. With all their personal service and generosity they, no better than the Evangelicals, got beyond a class-conscious charity. Christian social theory did not develop here; nor indeed did it from the later ceremonialists who in the slums expressed a passionate sympathy for the under-dog without any very clear idea what to do about it.

More was to be expected from the Broad Church section. The term can only be used in wide sense to cover a very varied company of people who were not necessarily conscious of being a defined group. They had no fear of reform as such or of new ideas as such. Arnold of Rugby saw further than many of his contemporaries into the social evils of his time, yet his remedy was vaguely thought of as an effort on the part of a renewed Church and a renewed aristocracy to mend matters, not altogether unlike Disraeli's "Young England" group. With F. D. Maurice, however, we are on surer ground. Much of his life was dogged by struggles with those Evangelicals and Tractarians who held a crude verbal inspiration view of the Bible and to that extent he seemed a "modernist"

to us. But the cosmic sweep of his thought grasped the wholeness of God's purposes in creation and history in a way which has not always characterized liberal thought, whilst his positive social approach was a wholesome corrective of the other-worldliness of the Evangelicals and the nostalgia for the past of the Tractarians. Yet his insistence on God's order as already operative, marred only by man's failure, his non-historical outlook, and his hatred of man made schemes to put things right, prevented him from working out a Christian social theory. His work, however, has proved an inspiration to others, who have seen that God's order, established in creation and restored in principle in Jesus Christ, must be realized as far as we can in practice, and that means varying schemes in different historical circumstances. Maurice's thought has mostly influenced one wing of the Catholic section of the Church of England, especially through Stewart Headlam and Conrad Noel. Later liberals have not succeeded in getting much beyond the individualism of the Evangelicals without their literalist theology. They have been handicapped by a vague doctrine of the Church and an optimistic doctrine of man. The former has made it difficult for them to distinguish between the Church and the whole community which is regarded as Christian—in some ways more Christian than the Church. The optimistic view of man has meant that one of the distinctively Christian contributions to social thought, and the one specially needed by secular idealistic reformers, has been missed. It also meant that those liberals who were conscious of social evils tended to think that the removal of bad environmental influences and the providing of better education would lead to the flowering of

Christian virtues. The Christ in ordinary folk, now thwarted by bad conditions, would then shine clearly. This was true even of Barnett whose work in White-chapel from 1873 was the most constructive of all Christian social efforts in the nineteenth century. This of course is the common attitude of secular social reformers of today. An ever more prominent tendency of middle-class liberals has been an optimistic and conservative acceptance of things as they are, borrowed from the period of expanding free capitalism when liberal theology came into its own.

Meanwhile throughout this period working-class theology, so far as it had any, was a reverence for the ethical teaching of Jesus, with the apocalyptic and eschatological elements excluded, combined with a conviction that the social system was in flat contradiction to it, and that the Church had not the courage to say so. One expression of this was the "Labour Churches," thirty of which were in existence in 1907, though none have survived. It is still the point of view of most reflective workers: the theology of the Church remains irrelevant and unintelligible to them.

It is time to turn to a brief sketch of events. The Christian Socialism of Maurice, Ludlow, Kingsley and Neale did not begin until 1848, after all the ferment of the preceding years of the century, culminating in the Chartist fiasco of 1848, had died away. The Church was years behind the times. The title, said Maurice, "will commit us at once to the conflict we must engage in sooner or later with the unsocial Christians and the unChristian Socialists." Its Working Men's Associations were examples of producers' co-operation, a fondness for which has characterized

much Christian social theory ever since. It was well that the experiment was tried, but experience shows that it is not the best way of dealing with the problem of power in modern industrial society; workers are themselves a sectional interest. We are all consumers, however, and Consumers' Co-operation, on the Rochdale model, has forged ahead in retail trading and also in many lines of production through the English and Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Societies. Consumers can best control heavy and basic industry through one of the many methods of public control or ownership. Unwillingness to accept this has led much Christian thought to a dislike of machine production and to toying with the impossible idea of harking back to a more primitive pre-industrial state of society. Unfortunately the Christian Socialists themselves, especially Ludlow, were blind to the merits of consumers' co-operation; although Neale and others played a part in it, their faith in producers' co-operation is shown by the fact that as late as 1872 they backed the London Council of Builders. After 1854, when all the associations had failed, the energies of the Christian Socialists were turned into other channels; Kingsley, the mouth-piece, into literary and parish work; Ludlow, the only one of them who knew much about socialism, into the Friendly Societies; Neale to the Co-operative Movement; and Maurice to education at the Working Men's College, where there was, in the words of Frederick Harrison "some Christianity, a little armchair socialism, and a mild infusion of real working men." Nevertheless it is very largely due to them that the divorce between Christianity and working class politics, though wide enough, is nothing like so complete as it is on the Continent.

For the moment, however, the Church was little affected. The years after the turn of the century were prosperous; labour agitation died down. The rich and powerful were urged to be benevolent and the poor to help themselves. Discussion on social affairs in church bodies such as the revived Convocations and the new Church Congresses, were confined to Temperance and Education. The former was sceptically received by many and provoked Archbishop Magee's 'bon mot': "If I must make my choice, I should say it would be better that England should be free than that England should be sober," whilst church leaders never, in their attitude to the latter, got free from the odour of charity and condescension which had clung to their educational policies from the days of Hannah More and the foundation of the National Society in 1811. In the agricultural unrest of 1872-4 associated with Joseph Arch, the Established clergy were, with a few exceptions such as Bishop Fraser of Manchester and E. D. Girdlestone, so reactionary that Bishop Gore once said it was the only time in his life he was tempted to leave the church. Girdlestone should be remembered for organizing the emigration of two-thirds of his parish of Halberton, North Devon, between 1866 and 1872 when the local farmers refused to raise wages; as a result wages rose from 7-8/- to 17/- per week.

Events moved more swiftly after 1870. Great Britain had no longer a virtual industrial monopoly. Carlyle and Ruskin had made their protest against *laissez-faire* industrialism. The old classical economics was being humanized by Marshall, the Webbs were beginning their social studies, whilst the work of Toynbee, Cunningham and Ashley was bring-

ing a historical perspective to bear on what was coming to be known, in Toynbee's phrase, as "The Industrial Revolution." Settlements were begun in the East End with Toynbee Hall in 1884, Charles Booth was driven by his Salvation Army experiences into a study of social conditions: Henry George's "Progress and Poverty" startled the orthodox economists in much the same way as Schweitzer's view of Jesus startled liberal Protestants in 1906. Positivism was affecting middle-class secular reformers, and Marxism was heard of. Anglican social thought began to move. In 1877 Stewart Headlam founded the Guild of St. Matthew at Bethnal Green "to promote the study of social and political questions in the light of the Incarnation." It depended very much on the personality and character of its founder. It was more socialist than Maurice, but did not get much further towards a plan relevant to the times than he did. Headlam was temperamentally apathetic to Fabianism (and it was the Fabian Society which gave the Labour movement a programme—public ownership) whilst his unhistorical view of the past led him to apply statements of the Fathers or the Anglican Reformers to situations which they were never designed to fit. Further he was diverted by Henry George's Single Tax Movement. His best work, and in this Conrad Noel followed him, was to stress the social implications of Baptism and Holy Communion, as against the older Tractarians who were led away by the individualistic pietism of the Counter Reformation.

Fresh steps were taken in 1889, the year of the great dock strike, with the foundation of the Christian Social Union, "to study in common how to apply the moral truths and principles of Christian-

ity to the social and economic difficulties of the present time." Westcott was the first President, followed by Gore. It is doubtful if the Church of England got further than Westcott until after C. O. P. E. C. in 1924. Westcott's position is indicated by his three-fold statement "If the Word became flesh, the brotherhood of man is a reality for us. If the Son of God was crucified, the fall, and with it the redemption, are realities for us. If the Son of Man rose again from the dead, the eternal significance of our short space of labour is a reality for us."⁶ Westcott's thought was too abstract for many, who found Scott Holland more to their taste. By 1897 the Christian Social Union had 27 branches and 2,600 members, and its influence was widespread. Much work was done on the social teaching of the Bible, both of the prophets and of Jesus, whilst there was for the first time an emphasis on the study of the actual social situation. It began to be seen that the form in which Christian ends are realized will vary with different stages in the social process, and the facts of that process must be mastered before it is possible to know what to advocate. The Oxford branch issued the *Economic Review* from 1891 to 1914, and the first volume contained an acute appraisal by Scott Holland of Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. "There is a patriarchal simplicity assumed throughout—it has all nothing to do with the world in which we live; it is the voice of some old-world life, faint and ghostly, speaking in some antique tongue of things long ago." In 1908 our present Archbishop of Canterbury and Rashdall argued as to whether the Gospels involved evolutionary socialism. The Christian Social Union studied social problems such as housing, published "white lists" of firms not selling

goods produced by sweated labour, and took a great interest in the Trade Boards Act of 1909. It was very remote, however, from working class life, even Scott Holland had little direct touch with labour, and to many who joined it Christian social teaching did not mean much more than being kindly within the structure of capitalism, or reforms which were sufficiently conservative to be thought non-political. Nor were they sufficiently influential to prevent the ethos of the Fabian Society, run by the Webbs, Shaw and Graham Wallas, from being a kind of ethical positivism.

However the Christian Social Union had a considerable influence in the Church; between 1889 and 1913 fourteen of its members became Bishops. In 1907 a Report of the Convocation of Canterbury on "The Moral Witness of the Church on Economic Subjects" said "the idea of individual salvation has been disastrously isolated in Christian teaching and in current Christian belief from the social idea of original Christianity . . .". The Lambeth Conference of 1908 rehashed stock Christian Social Union phrases. Yet the political vagueness of much Christian Social Union work and the effeteness of the Guild of St. Matthew, led a group of Anglicans to found the Church Socialist League in 1906. Its members included Conrad Noel, Henry Slessor, R. H. Tawney, Maurice Reckitt, Paul Bull and W. H. Frere. From the start its basis was uncertain; there were theological disagreements which led to later splits, nor was it clear what type of socialism the League stood for. Labour itself was troubled with Syndicalism at this time. On the whole it favored Guild Socialism and thus came round almost full circle to the position of the Christian Socialists half a century before, (Ludlow

did not die till 1911), and which had persisted in spite of Fabian and Marxist criticism. Is it an attraction for the Middle Ages which has led so many Christians, some of whom are still with us, to think that their faith demands a commonwealth of producers' organizations? The ambiguity as to whether the members were Christians *and* Socialists or Christians *hence* Socialists led to Conrad Noel leaving the Church Socialist League and forming the Catholic Crusade in 1918, following Headlam's theology. ("It's the Mass that matters" was a saying of his) and finding there the pattern of the Christian communist commonwealth. A remnant still continues as the Order of the Church Militant. In 1923 another split in the Church Socialist League occurred when The League of the Kingdom of God was formed. Its members were as anxious as those of the Catholic Crusade to have a Christian programme but were unwilling to take one over ready-made, as they expressed it, from the Labour Movement. Since 1925 they have sponsored a Summer School of "Christian Sociology" at Oxford, now allied with Church Social Action of the Church Union, which strives to find some "Christian" alternative distinct from the programmes of the different political parties. In 1924 the remainder of the Church Socialist League became an inter-denominational Society of Socialist Christians, now known as the Socialist Christian League, whose chairman is Father Groser of Stepney. The League is active within the working class Labour Movement and makes some distinction, though not a very clear one, between the Christian Faith and a socialist political and economic structure of society. Meanwhile the Christian Social Union had joined with the Navy Mission in 1919

to form the Industrial Christian Fellowship which had plenty of funds and no policy. For a time the personality of Studdert Kennedy carried it along; lately it has grown steadily nearer in outlook to the Church Union school of "sociology."

As far as the Church of England as a whole is concerned, interest in Christian Social teaching has greatly increased, due in part to the influence of the Christian Social Union and the Industrial Christian Fellowship and in part to the economic dislocations of the times. Furthermore, it has become merged into inter-denominational and then Oecumenical activity. 1911 saw the first meeting of an inter-Church Conference of Social Service Unions, the experience of which led to the Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship at Birmingham in 1924. That Conference marked the end of an epoch. It owed a great deal to Anglican thought of the preceding fifty years, and especially to the Report of the Commission on Industrial Problems appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York in 1917, and to the ideas of Westcott. C.O.P.E.C. in turn contributed to the stream of oecumenical thought at the Stockholm Conference on "Life and Work" in 1925. This set up a research department, which together with the Christian Social Council of Great Britain, prepared for the Oxford Conference on "Church, Community and State" in 1937 and preceded it by the most thorough oecumenical interchange of thought that had taken place for many centuries. Anglicans are no longer working out a Christian social theory on their own; they are enriched by the contributions of an American Protestant like Reinhold Niebuhr, a Continental Reformed Churchman like Emil

Brunner who has written the most comprehensive modern book on Christian Ethics,⁷ a Greek Orthodox like Nicholas Berdyaev and a Roman Catholic like Jacques Maritain. Plainly we have moved far since C.O.P.E.C. Sex, drink, housing, education, cannot be isolated; the whole structure of society is involved. A far more accurate analysis of the evolution and present state of capitalism has been required; the challenge of modern totalitarianisms has had to be met and in particular the "ideological" element in thought, which Marxism has pointed out, has had to be appreciated. Indeed Christian social thought, as that of the Labour Movement as a whole, has only recently begun to face the challenge and to see the weakness of Marxism. More appreciation is still needed of fundamental economic problems. Loose phrases such as "substituting co-operation for competition" and "production for use and not for profit" conceal all the real problems. But the crucial need of "planning for freedom" has been made clear by sociologists such as Karl Mannheim.⁸ Oecumenical thinking is grasping these issues, and now it can be claimed for the first time for centuries that the best Christian thought is not only abreast of events, but sees further than that of non-Christians.

Yet in the Church of England much remains to be done. For one thing the whole economic structure of the Church itself is called into question on all sides and if the Church has not the vision to reform itself, the time may not be far distant when it is forcibly reformed from without. Again it has failed to raise up more than a handful of labour and trade union folk who are also Churchmen, and have related their religious and political views within a theology which could

comprehend them both in terms of a final purpose, and indicate where the lessons of each had relevance to the other. Consequently the younger leaders of the Unions and the Labour movement are increasingly atheistical, whilst many of the older ones cling pathetically to a secular humanistic optimism.⁹ The great bulk of Anglican social thought in the last century has been, to its credit, from the Catholic wing of the Church. It has tried to develop the social theories of the Middle Ages, which were largely lost because of their inadequacy. "They were inadequate from the first to the facts of the case, and were bound to become more and more inadequate as the facts themselves changed during the ensuing ages."¹⁰ There has been a grave danger of the mistake being repeated and of clericalism creeping in, and the formalism which the Bishop of Oxford has pointed out as one of the three great dangers of moral theology.¹¹ As the Anglo-Catholics have adopted Roman devotions, so they have become more attached to Aquinas and the economic theories of Autonino of Padua, when they have not been led astray by Major Douglas. Their analysis of modern economics and industry has been inadequate and erroneous because their theology has prevented them from admitting the necessary autonomy of the social sciences and hence from acquiring the specialized technique needed for dealing with the complex modern social scene. Further their search for some "Christian" alternative to the authoritarian or democratic planning which are the only courses open to us, has meant that they have been urbane and remote from the practical issues of the day. The influence of specifically Anglican thought has therefore tended to be confined to a very theo-

retical sociology on the one hand or else small utopian left groups on the other.

The question remains, granted that the Church is committed to making the Kingly rule of God mean something real in industrial and political life, does it follow that Anglican doctrine implies a distinct form of social organization and programme of action? Or rather, since in this matter Anglican doctrine is that of Christendom, does Christian doctrine as such lead to a specifically "Christian" form of society? The attempt to maintain that it does is bound up with a particular view of natural law and of the relation of secular learning to the Queen of the Sciences, named by an absence of the insight that we owe to Protestantism and ultimately of course to the Bible itself, that all social systems fall short of the absolute demands of the Gospel. Consequently the Christian task is always to work for the next step forward in the light of the possible alternatives open at the time. To know these involves a good deal of general and specialized knowledge which is not peculiarly "Christian" and on which opinions may very well differ; hence the conclusion which emerges from such a process of reflection cannot be labelled "Christian." There is bound to be an element of uncertainty. In these as in all matters we are justified by faith, not by the correctness of our conclusions or our actions. Allied with this is the

necessity of laying on lay folk the task of working out singly and together their Christian responsibilities in their daily jobs, and what is equally important, leaving them to do it. All this is a wide subject which it is impossible to pursue further here. The point is that traditional moral theory was on wrong foundations on these points; it was essentially a kind of Pharisaism which aimed at making the commands of God practicable by reducing them to an elaborate system of a priori rules. Unfortunately Evangelicals and Liberals in the Church of England have never given sufficient sustained thought to Christian ethics in general, let alone Christian social teaching. The Reformation never did its work in reforming Moral Theology; the Church merely continued that of the past until it died out. Yet until this weakness of moral theology is frankly faced little progress is possible. The time for a Protestant ethic may have gone by; perhaps there will be an Oecumenical ethic which reconciles the Catholic-Protestant division. The Archbishop of Canterbury, who has a foot in both camps, may lead the way: indeed he has partly done so.¹² In any event, the Church of England is surely in a strategic place to work on it, and within that Church the Evangelicals and Liberals, with gratitude for what has been achieved during the last century, must be prepared to play their part.

1. Church and People. S. C. Carpenter p. 335.
2. Religion and the Rise of Capitalism. R. H. Tawney.
3. The Transition to Democracy. O. F. Christie p. 126.
4. Liberal Evangelicalism. H. A. Wilson; quoted in G. C. Binyon: The Christian Socialist Movement in England p. 57.
5. Christian Socialism. C. E. Raven p. 21.
6. Quoted "The Church of England and Social Reform since 1854" D. O. Wagner.
7. The Divine Imperative. Emil Brunner.
8. Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction. K. Mannheim.
9. Article "The Christian Socialist Movement in England." D. M. Paton. Radical Religion (New York) Fall 1938.
10. Historical Illustrations of the Social Effects of Christianity. C.O.P.E.C. Commission Report. Vol. XII p. 169.
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THE HISTORICAL ROOTS OF EUROPEAN NIHILISM

By KARL LOWITH

CHAPTER I.

The Dissolution of Old-Europe

THE dissolution of the religious and moral unity of the Christian Occident began with the German Reformation. Its political tradition was shattered by the French Revolution, which was to be continued by the Russian Revolution, for Bolshevism originated in western Europe, with the Jacobins. The events of 1789, 1848 and 1917 belong to the same movement. Together, the French and the Russian revolutions made a clean sweep of the past. Both mark an epochal incision in European history. Carlyle called the French Revolution the third act of the world's history: for him the whole history of Christianity was but one single epoch in relation to this revolution, the second act after the first of antiquity. He held the opinion that the European race had burst out into anarchy and several "grossly excited" centuries were ahead before the old house would be completely gutted by fire and something new could take its place. In their counter-revolutionary writings, Bonald and De Maistre in France, Burke in England and Gentz in Germany emphasized no less, each in his own fashion, that Europe faced a crisis. Napoleon's desire was to bridge the chasm opened by the revolution; his great project failed and the revolution of July 1830 made it obvious that the restoration which meanwhile had taken place was but an interlude. Accordingly one may say that since 1789

Europe has been living in a still unfinished era of revolutions.

In 1830 Niebuhr, the German historian, believed he saw a rising tide of subversion such as the world had seen during the third century: annihilation of wealth, liberty, civilization and science. Goethe concurred when he prophesied an impending barbarism, even declaring: "We are already right in it." In a conversation in 1829 on Europe's plight he said that the nineteenth century was not simply the continuation of the preceding century, but the beginning of a new period. He saw the time coming when God would no longer be glad of this world and "will have to smash up the whole for a renewed creation." He deemed the foundations of bourgeois society and its forms of intercourse destroyed and looked upon Saint Simon's writings as the clever outline of a thorough overthrow of the existing order. He saw in the modern French novels a "literature of despair," pressing upon the reader the opposite of all that man ought to be told for his own good. "To excel the ugly, the hideous, the cruel, the contemptible along with the whole kinship of the depraved, that is their satanic business." Everything was "ultra," perpetually "transcendent" in thought as in action.

No one knows himself any longer, no one understands the element in which he moves and works, or the subject which he is treating. Pure simplicity is

out of the question; of simpletons we have enough. Young people are excited much too early and then carried away in the whirl of the times. Wealth and rapidity are what the world admires and what everyone strives to attain. Railways, quick mails, steamships and every possible kind of rapid communications are what the educated world has in view so that it overeducates itself and thereby continues in a state of mediocrity. It is, moreover, the result of universality that a mediocre culture becomes common. . . . This is a century for men with heads on their shoulders, for practical men of quick perceptions who, because they possess a certain adroitness, feel their superiority above the multitude, even though they themselves may not be gifted in the highest degree. . . . We and perhaps a few others will be the last of an epoch which will not soon return.

Burckhardt makes up his mind in 1846. He departs from the political radicalism of his early friends, and henceforth restricts himself to the culture of "Old-Europe." According to Burckhardt some sort of Roman Caesarism with great national wars looming on the horizon was in store for Europe. The state will again become all-powerful on the basis of democratic levelling and thus bid the masses "to shut up." Questions of pure legality have never arisen where movements of whole nations are concerned, but this time it would seem "as though there were no law and no question left at all." This despotism would not be exercised by tender-hearted dynasties, but by military authorities which are able to govern with absolute brutality, scornful of law, material wealth, sovereignty of the people or even science. Possibly such despotisms will succeed to a great

degree and subdue the European world even in an absolutistic sense." The two claws of the pincers between which so-called culture will find itself crushed and which have operated since 1840 are the working classes from below and the military hierarchy from above. The result may again be a Roman Empire, after the intervening appearance of several minor successor states.

"Terrible simplificateurs" will come over Old-Europe and the pattern of all life, even more than now, will be the expediency of thorough-going militarism. Quite unpredictable, however, will be the fate of the working classes: "a fixed and controlled amount of misery, glorified by military advancement and uniforms, begun and finished with a roll of drums, is the logical thing to come." There can be no question of stopping on this road, and perhaps it will be in Germany that the sovereignty of a militarized state will first mature. "Alas! How much that was dear to the educated man will have to be thrown overboard as spiritual luxury! And how strangely different from what we are will the new generation be . . . 'Prepare for death', that's the wisest thing for all of us to do, in all of Central Europe. Everything will change."

The same thought is found in the writings of Bruno Bauer, a radical disciple of Hegel. He believed that imperialistic dictatorships would dominate Europe and they would decide the question "Russia or Europe."

The illusion of the revolution of 1848, that the time had arrived when the members of the historical family of nations, fortified by the new principle of equal rights and self-determination, will constitute themselves independently and cooperate peacefully, this illusion has the same fate as all illusions dating

the era of a new freedom from the downfall of existing barriers to personal activity. This illusion cannot but dissolve through the force of a sterner authority. It shares the fate of that other illusion which sees in individualism the result of the last sixty revolutionary years, the solution of all problems, while it is proved daily that it is only a makeshift condition, shaping one side only and riveted by an iron law to its opposite: imperialism and dictatorship.

For the overthrow of the old order of associations and classes deprived the individual of his personal significance as a member of certain corporations, subduing him thus to an extended system of centralization and to the omnipotence of the whole. "Labor is freed but unchained it will aim at a sterner centralization, dragging in with arms of steel all the single human beings that felt well and secure in their former seclusion and forcing them to submit or to die." Bauer thought that laws would again be passed, which as in the old "military-theological world" before the French Revolution, would keep men under discipline and determine their feeling, thinking and wishing according to fixed standards. Still lacking, however, would be the science of historical laws, which could seize upon the mind and the soul of the masses as the old moral order had done. In this respect the social sciences have not yet caught up with the natural sciences. Between present anarchy and the future shape of government and society Bauer's contemporaries are unsteady individuals who ask timidly "What now?" and think their dissatisfaction with the present contains the strength of the future.

The question for Bauer is "whether the Germanic world will survive the de-

cline of the old civilization—for nothing is more certain than this decline—or whether the Russian nation alone will determine the new, whether the incipient era will be called Russian, or whether conjointly with Russianism, Germanism too will confer its name upon it . . . The German and the Russian questions are the only two vital questions of modern Europe. The latter question, however, had already been posed so precisely by Catherine that the reply to it will precede the answer to the other, for it is supported by such a great organization that the power in control of it can set the time to bring matters to a crisis and cut the Gordian knot."

One decade later in France Proudhon sketched the disintegration of Old-Europe:

Today civilization is truly in a critical stage which has only one historical analogy, the crisis caused by the rise of Christianity. All traditions are used up, all faith is worn out. On the other hand, the new program is neither ready nor has it entered yet the consciousness of the masses. Hence, what I call disintegration. It is the most terrible moment in the life of society. Everything combines in order to sadden people of good will: the prostitution of conscience, the triumph of mediocrity, the confusion of true and false, the betrayal of principles; baseness of passions, negligence of morals, suppression of truth, a prize for lying. I do not delude myself. I do not expect tomorrow the return of liberty, regard for right, public decency, freedom of speech, integrity of the newspapers, morality of the government, good sense of the citizens and public mindedness of the plebeians, all to be reborn in our country by means of a magician's rod. No, no, I cannot

see the end of the decadence: it will not diminish within one or two generations; that is our lot. . . I shall see the evil only, and shall die in utter darkness, marked by the past with the seal of rejection . . . Havoc will result and the depression following the blood bath will be terrible. We shan't see the dawn of the new era, we shall struggle by night and it is necessary to prepare for endurance by doing our duty with a minimum of sadness. Let us stand by each other, call out to each other in the dark, and do justice as often as opportunity presents itself.

Again a decade later, after the Franco-Prussian war, E. Renan's *La Reforme Intellectuelle et Morale* appeared, while in Germany Nietzsche was writing his *Meditations*, likewise a diagnosis of the time and an attempt to find a way out. In the third of the *Unzeitgemasse Betrachtungen* (1874) Europe's plight is described, in a tone like Burckhardt's.

From Proudhon, Renan and Nietzsche the road leads to Georges Sorel, whose books have helped to shape the fascist movement. Since the middle of the nineteenth century European historians no longer follow the pattern of progress, but that of decay.

CHAPTER II.

Nihilism In European Literature

In the midst of frantic progress, of domination and exploitation of the world by means of the new technical inventions, a feeling of aimless and a spiritual pessimism cast its shadow upon Europe's finer spirits. During the middle of the century European literature produced a type of Nihilism formerly unknown. Immermann's novel *Die Epigonen* (1830), Gutzkow's *Die Nihilisten* (1853), and Turgeniev's *Fathers and Sons* (1860)

provoked very lively discussions. This nihilism found its most sophisticated expression in Flaubert and Baudelaire.

Having shown up in the *Temptation of St. Anthony* all sorts of current beliefs and superstitions, Flaubert set about to disentangle and analyze the chaos of scientific culture. He made a list of human follies, intended as an ironical glorification of all that had passed as truth. The result of these absurd studies was the novel *Bouvard et Pecuchet*: two Philistines, sincerely striving for their higher education, good natured and men of sense, who had been office clerks. They ramble in their happily acquired country seat through the entire maze of piled up knowledge from horticulture, chemistry and medicine to history, archeology, politics, pedagogy and philosophy only to return to their copying by making extracts from the books, they had perused in vain. The whole work leads to the conclusion that our entire education is inane. Doctrines of age-long standing are expounded and developed in a few lines, then they are disposed of by other doctrines which are arraigned against them, and then with equal precision and passion destroyed in their turn. Page after page, line after line, some new kind of knowledge turns up, but at once another appears to knock the first one down and then it, too, topples over, hit by a third. At the end of the unfinished sketch, Pecuchet draws a gloomy picture, and Bouvard a rosy one of the future of European mankind. According to the one, the end of the debased human race, sunk into general depravity, approaches. There are three alternative possibilities: 1) radicalism severs every tie with the past, entailing inhumane despotism; 2) if theistic absolutism should be victorious, liberalism, with which mankind has

been imbued since the French Revolution, will perish, and a revolutionary change will take place: 3) if the convulsions of 1789 continue, their waves will carry us away and there will no longer be ideals or religion or morality; America will conquer the world. According to the second picture, Europe will be rejuvenated with the aid of Asia, and there will develop undreamt of techniques of communications, U-boats and balloons; new sciences will be born enabling man to place the powers of the universe at the service of civilization and, when the earth is exhausted, to emigrate to other stars. Together with human wants, evil will cease, and philosophy will become religion.

Baudelaire's intention to compose "The end of the world" dates from the same period. Some fragments of it, entitled *Fusces* appeared three years after the revolution of February 1848. Like almost all young intellectuals Baudelaire had a hand in this revolt against the bourgeois order, eager as he was for revenge and destruction, and full of literary excitement. Later he regretted this ardor of 1848, not from reactionary motives but because he wished to separate himself even more completely from the existing social order and to live in solitude and independence. The lowering of culture to a general level of mediocrity foreseen by Goethe, is to Baudelaire a downright Luciferian fall into nothingness, from which only "artificial paradises" can deliver us:

The world is drawing to a close. Only for one reason can it last longer: just because it happens to exist. But how weak a reason is this compared with all that forebodes the contrary, particularly with the question: What is left to the world of man in the future? Suppos-

ing it should continue materially, would that be an existence worthy of its name and of the historical dictionary? I do not say the world would fall back into a spectral condition and the odd disorder of South American republics; nor do I say that we should return to primitive savagery and, with a rifle in our arms, hunt for food through the grass-covered ruins of our civilization. No, such adventures would still call for a certain vital energy, an echo from primordial times. We shall furnish a new example of the inexorability of the spiritual and moral laws and shall be their new victims: *we shall perish by the very thing by which we fancy that we live*. Technocracy will americanize us, progress will starve our spirituality so far that nothing of the bloodthirsty, frivolous or unnatural dreams of the utopists will be comparable to these positive facts. I invite any thinking person to show me what is left of life. Religion! It is useless to talk about it, or to look for its remnants; it is a scandal that one takes the trouble even of denying God. Private property! It was — strictly speaking — abolished with the suppression of the right of primogeniture; yet the time will come when mankind like a revengeful cannibal will snatch the last piece from those who rightfully deemed themselves the heirs of revolutions. And even this will not be the worst. . . Universal ruin will manifest itself not solely or particularly in political institutions or general progress or whatever else might be a proper name for it; it will be seen, above all, in the baseness of hearts. Shall I add that that little left-over of sociability will hardly resist the sweeping brutality, and that the rulers, in order to hold their own and to produce a sham order, will ruth-

lessly resort to measures which will make us, who already are callous, shudder?

The same picture of the future as drawn by Flaubert and Baudelaire appears in the Russian criticism of Europe. In 1880 Dostoyevsky argues in his *Diary of a Writer* against the Russian enthusiasts for Western culture that, in view of the failure of Europe to solve its own problems and of its imminent terrible collapse, it is ridiculous to demand that the Russians import European institutions in order to catch up with the progress of the west. "The European ant-hill built up without a church and without Christianity—for everywhere in Europe the church has lost her ideal and has turned into a state—this ant-hill on a rotten foundation, lacking every universal and absolute, is completely undermined." What good will it do to take over from Europe institutions which will break down there tomorrow, institutions in which the most intelligent Europeans themselves no longer believe, while they are being slavishly copied by Russians as though the comedy of the bourgeois order were the normal form of human society.

Tolstoi in 1910, the last year of his life, wrote the following piece of radical criticism of the European civilization which was now corrupting not only Europe but also India, Africa, China and Japan:

The medieval theology, or the Roman corruption of morals, poisoned only their own people, a small part of mankind; today, electricity, railways and telegraphs spoil the whole world. Everyone makes these things his own. He simply cannot help making them his own. Everyone suffers in the same way, is forced to the same extent to change his way of life. All are under the neces-

sity of betraying what is most important for their lives, the understanding of life itself, religion. Machines—to produce what? The telegraph—to despatch what? Books, papers—to spread what kind of news? Railways—to go to whom and to what place? Millions of people herded together and subject to a supreme power—to accomplish what? Hospitals, physicians, dispensaries in order to prolong life—for what? How easily do individuals as well as whole nations take their own so-called civilization as the true civilization: finishing one's studies, keeping one's nails clean, using the tailor's and the barber's services, travelling abroad and the most civilized man is complete. And with regard to nations: as many railways as possible, academies, industrial works, battleships, forts, newspapers, books, parties, parliaments. Thus the most civilized nation is complete. Enough individuals, therefore, as well as nations can be interested in civilization but not in true enlightenment. The former is easy and meets with approval; the latter require rigorous efforts and therefore, from the great majority, always meets with nothing but contempt and hatred, for it exposes the lie of civilization.

Further documents of this kind extending up to the present day could easily be added. Nihilism as the disavowal of existing civilization was the only real belief of all truly educated people at the beginning of the twentieth century. Nihilism is not a result of the Great War but, on the contrary, its cause. Most fully aware of all this was the literary circle around the poet Stefan George. In the preface to the third annual issue of the *Yearbook for the Spiritual Movement* (1912), edited by Gundolf and Wolters, we read: "Even the dim eye does not

fail to observe the general cheerlessness spreading despite all improvements, alleviations and amusements, provoking the comparison with the late Roman Empire. From the Emperor to the humblest worker everyone feels that it cannot go on in this way. Everyone is willing to admit that, at least for departments not affecting him directly. What sustains is merely the individual's concern for office, goods and chattels. Nobody believes any longer in the foundations of the present state of the world. These pessimistic presentiments and divinations represent the truest feelings of the time and all hopes to build something on nothing have, therefore, the look of despair."

CHAPTER III.

Turning Points in European Philosophy

Hegel marks the end of the history of the old European spirit. Being on the historical road of "progress in the consciousness of freedom," the spirit finally attains in Hegel its perfect knowing and being, thus consummating its history in a double sense. In Hegel's system the history of the spirit comes to its fulfillment ("*Voll-endung*"), i.e., to its greatest fullness as well as to its final end. The principle of "final" construction underlies not only the closing chapter of phenomenology, the system of the encyclopedia and the "conclusion" of logic, but also all special kinds of knowledge. Both the history of the world and most clearly that of the arts, end in a state of perfection. According to Hegel's division of the history of philosophy, his own system stands at the end of the third epoch. The first extends from Thales to Proclus and comprises the beginning and the decline of the ancient world. In its culmination in Proclus, the ancient reconciliation between the temporal and cele-

tial world comes to pass. The second epoch extends from the beginning of the Christian era to the Reformation. In it, though on a higher level, the same reconciliation of the finite and the infinite comes to pass again in order to be consummated in the third epoch, in the philosophy from Descartes to Hegel, by the latter. Like Proclus, Hegel has united the world of the Christian Logos with the absolute totality of the concretely organized idea and thus he is the conclusion of all three epochs. With Proclus the spirit of the world is to be found at a great turning point before the absolute break, i.e., the onset of Christianity into the pagan world. In a letter to Creuzer, Hegel likewise mentions this "tremendous step" due particularly to Proclus as representing the true turning point of the transition from ancient philosophy to Christianity. Now it is again time to take "a similar step."

But what is the consequence of Hegel's consummation of the Christian philosophy? Obviously, that it must be the last step before a new turn, a break with Christianity! Then, indeed, Hegel's consummation is the same as that of Proclus: a "reconciliation of decay." The highest development is simultaneous with the beginning of a decline at a time when "everything is about to dissolve and to strive for something new." To this new era Hegel gave only an indirect expression. He thinks in terms of the remembrance of the past, in the "grey old age of the spirit," and at the same time in the anticipation of a potentially new territory of the spirit, though explicitly leaving aside the knowledge of it. There are a few bare references to America, which since the beginning of the century is held to be the future country of liberty. He envisages the possibility of the spirit of

the world emigrating from Europe. "America is thus the country of the future in which in times to come . . . the momentousness of the history of the world shall reveal itself; it is the longed-for country of all those who are tired of the historical arsenal of old Europe. Napoleon is said to have exclaimed: *cette vieille Europe m'ennuie* . . . However, what has been happening there (in America) is only an echo of the old world and the expression of an alien life; moreover, as a country of the future, it does not concern us here at all." Similarly, Hegel concludes a reference to the future importance of the Slavic world, understood by him as an intermediate organism in the struggle of Christian Europe with Asia, with the sentence that he does not deal with this complex of data because it has not yet materialized as an independent element in the succession of the forms of the Logos. "Whether this will happen later on, does not interest us here."

Most radical-minded among all Hegelians with regard to Hegel's consummation of history were Marx and Kierkegaard. Both found themselves confronted with the question, how to go further. They answered, a new start can be made not by continuing the course followed to its very end by Hegel, but only by a distinct break with him. Marx achieved this break in the name of social action, and Kierkegaard in that of ethical passion. Both saw that Hegel's meditation between reason and reality was without validity. Consequently they set a "decision" over against his "mediation," Marx for a new earthly world, and Kierkegaard for the old Christian God. To the *Communist Manifesto* (1847) corresponds Kierkegaard's *The Present Age* (1846). Marx's criticism of the

bourgeois-capitalistic world and Kierkegaard's criticism of the bourgeois-Christian world are related to each other as the obverse of a coin is to its reverse.

That Marx demands a political decision concerning the masses, and Kierkegaard a religious decision of the individual in his singleness; that Marx philosophizes without God and Kierkegaard before God, these obvious contrasts have a common ground in their falling out with the world and with God. Due to a common opposition to Hegel's "reasonable world" they sever what had been united by him. Marx decided in favor of a humanitarian world, Kierkegaard in favor of a worldless Christianity. They conceive "what exists" as a world defined in terms of goods and money or as an existence permeated by irony and boredom. Hegel's "spirit-realm" turns into a world of labor and despair; his "idea in and for itself" with Marx turns into a "German Ideology" and the "self-delight" of the absolute spirit becomes a "sickness unto death" with Kierkegaard. Hegel's consummation of history signifies for both a "pre-history" before an extensive revolution or an intensive reformation.

Simultaneously with Marx and Kierkegaard the other radical pupils of Hegel also made this negation of the existing order the basis of their thinking. Stirner took his stand on "nothing." Feuerbach says that one has to be "absolutely negative" in order to be able to create new things. Bauer demands "feats of nothingness" as the foundation of new worlds. "If these are the three greatest turning points of history when Socrates gloried in his not-knowing in the face of a theocracy; when Christianity, opposing the imperial powers, set the soul above everything else; when Descartes told us to doubt everything—if these feats of

nothingness created new worlds, then the very final and most difficult resolve, namely, to will nothing, nothing of what has been, will give man complete mastery over the world."

The term "nihilism" changes its color from an expression of pessimism and weariness to an active destruction, until Nietzsche reveals the European nihilism as a "logic" of decadence, i.e., as the necessary presupposition of a new beginning. By turning definitely the romantic nihilism of weakness into one of strength, Nietzsche drew those extreme conclusions from the experience of the last century which only now prove truly epochal and hold sway over us. He considered the pessimism of the "fin de siècle" merely a "precursive form of nihilism." Thus he set for himself the task to push the feeling of inanity and aimlessness of all existence to that extreme point where it should reverse itself into the will to new values.

In the first chapter of his last book, the *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche explains to the world why he represents something decisive and fateful between two millennia, a person on the threshold. He knew himself as both decline and rise, as an end and a beginning. The same ambiguity which marks his existence also marks his concept of Europe. Europe is a world at once perishing and growing. But between these two processes there is no continuous transition, there is only a fateful act of decision. Nietzsche's ultimate goal is the spiritual and political mastery of the European over the globe. In order to force Europe into this "long range policy" ("*Grosse Politik*") which is simultaneously a "war of spirits," Europe must overcome its nihilism by becoming ready to form again a decisive and purposive whole, beating out a new order of

life. As a hammer for the will to power and life Nietzsche regarded his doctrine of the eternal recurrence, because it bids man accept his life at every moment as though it would return through all eternity, a doctrine counterbalancing the inanity and aimlessness caused by a disease of the will. The infirmity of the will is at its worst where civilization has longest prevailed, as in France. It decreases as the barbarian still or again asserts his claims under the loose drapery of Western education, as in Russia, which is touched by European civilization, but only skin-deep. However, the more the threatening attitude of Russia increases, the more will Europe have to decide to become equally threatening by acquiring *one* will, by means of a ruling cast that can set its aims thousands of years ahead and drill the democratic masses for this purpose. The time of petty-states is over. The twentieth century, Nietzsche prophesies, will with the struggle for the dominion of the globe bring the compulsion to great imperialistic politics. To this end, however, Germany will have to strive in all earnest for an "agreement" with England. "For nobody believes any longer that England herself will be strong enough to keep playing her old role even for fifty more years. . . . Nowadays one must be a soldier first, lest one lose his credit as a merchant. In brief, regarding these as well as other matters, the next century will be seen following in the footsteps of Napoleon, the most outstanding and anticipating personality of modern times." The standing armies, permanent since the Napoleonic wars, are but the first sign of Europe's new military development. "Personal, virile and physical capacity recovers its value, valuations become more physical, nutrition consists more and more of meat. Beautiful men

have once more become possible. Bloodless sneaks are a matter of the past. The savage, even the wild animal, in every one of us is acknowledged. Precisely on that account, philosophers will have a better chance." One must meet the alternative of perishing or of gaining a foothold. "A master race can grow up from terrible and violent beginnings only. Problem: where are the barbarians of the twentieth century? Obviously, only after tremendous social crises will they loom and consolidate themselves. It will be those elements which are capable of the greatest rigor towards themselves and able to vouch for the longest and strongest will." Nietzsche's faith in the future of Europe lies in its growing "more man-like."

This political program is not to be found on the periphery, but at the center of Nietzsche's philosophy. It follows from his analysis of European nihilism and its counter concept of the will, which is to replace the "Thou shalt" of the Christian faith. Europe's fate is, in Nietzsche's consciousness, bound up with himself. An echo and outburst of this will to determine Europe's faith is manifested in the letters from the period of his mental derangement. He invites the European princes (*nota bene*, exclusive of the Hohenzollerns) with the Pope to a conference to take place in Rome. But his entire sane production, too—from the *Thoughts out of Season* to the *Antichrist*—is a continuous war on everything that has been believed in, demanded and sanctioned through two thousand years. As immoralist and "destroyer par excellence" he taught that only by destroying could one create, true to the general description of the Germans given by Stirner in his review (1841) of Bauer's *Posaune* (trumpet):

Only the German and he alone demonstrates the mission of radicalism in the history of the world; he alone is radical and he alone is authentically so. No one is so inexorable and inconsiderate as he; he overturns not only the existing world in order to remain upright himself, he overturns himself, too. Where the German pulls down, a God must fall and a world perish. With the Germans destroying is creating and the destruction of the transient is his eternity.

It is the decline of Christianity and its morals which Nietzsche wants to hasten, for "what is falling, should be pushed down." The positive element of this will to overthrow the existing order is the will to power as a "revaluation of all values," the first part of which is (according to a last draft of 1888) the *Antichrist*. Zarathustra is the "victor over God and Nothingness," namely, the nothingness proceeding from the death of the Christian God. The will of man, now godless, must learn to command itself. For this the superlative energy of such a will is required. European nihilism, as Nietzsche sees it, is thus first a crisis of Christianity and lastly a decision to will and to create new, pagan Gods. In the meantime, however, the sole temporary truth can only be: "*Nothing is true any longer, everything is permitted.*" That the liberty to every thing as well as to nothing is implied in this, is "the advantage of our time." Morality and humanity are being replaced by the will to some aim and thus to its means.

From Napoleon and Bismarck Nietzsche learned that the democratic levelling of Europe would some day culminate in dictatorial leadership. For "the same new conditions which as a rule will produce equalized and mediocre men, useful,

industrious . . . and clever collective beings, are in the highest degree suitable to give rise to exceptional men of the most dangerous and attractive qualities . . . The democratization of Europe is also an involuntary arrangement for the rearing of tyrants—taking the word in its full sense, even in its most spiritual sense.” Nay, it might even prove for the emancipated masses themselves a kind of redemption and justification, if someone appeared who would use them as means to his ends. “The same conditions which tend to develop the gregarious animal also

force the development of the leader-beast.”

Nietzsche’s ideas paved the way to the Third Reich. He did not himself walk that way, but like all pathmakers, prepared it for others. The German *Aufbruch* or awakening which is supposed to have made nihilism a matter of the past, is indeed the achieved logic of disintegration, a “Revolution of Nihilism” as Rauschning rightly has called it, though he underestimates the depth of its historical ramifications.



THE SPIRITUAL NEED OF THE MODERN AGE

By RALPH READ

AMERICA knows how to invent. It uses electricity and steam and gasoline and makes machines that will go. It loves to make these machines go. It loves to take them apart and put them together again. It loves to fix them. It loves to smash them and buy new machines. It is fond of all kinds of gadgets. It enjoys bathing itself in luxuries. It made more fuss about giving up its gasoline than it did about giving its young boys to the war. Not that it did not love its boys, but machines are a part of its character and its hard to change one's character over night.

America likes sensations. We like big sensations, the bigger the better. Therefore we are crazy about moving pictures because the movies are always seeking to make the sensations bigger and better. Sometimes they succeed, sometimes it is the same old sensations all over. After a little we grow vexed at sensations when we have had too many of them. The sensation becomes no longer sensational and the seeker for sensations grows sick and tired of life. He has known so many sensations that he is tired, until gradually he grows even tired of being tired. Then he plays bridge until a new sensation comes along to tempt him.

America enjoys organizing. It enjoys organizing clubs and organizations. It keeps busy organizing its organizations into groups of organizations and movements of organizations. It sets up organizations to look after its organizations. It establishes super-organizations to co-

ordinate the work of the organizations which direct organizations. In fact we find we cannot live without something to organize, for if we actually stopped organizing we would have to learn to live with ourselves which we haven't yet learned to do.

The sad fact about all our life is that we have lost our souls and we do not care to advertise for them. We rush madly about in a kind of hopeless and futile activity to keep from being reminded of the fact that we are lost. We cannot read profound books, such reading requires a composed leisure which we do not have. Only a few can worship God. Worship also requires composure and quiet. Most of us haven't the patience to worship. Anyhow worship might show us our true hectic state of being, and we couldn't stand that. Our aim is to hide from ourselves so that we will not know what we ourselves are doing or how we are living.

Hunger and Frustration

Machine, sensation, organization and the wild wilderness of a disturbed activity which is mad for rest but cannot rest. All these things have made us a materialistic people. They have left us a hungry and frustrated group of human creatures, wistful and pagan. We are not exactly spiritually empty. Our minds are filled and even crammed with ideas and things. Greedy Gods consume our every waking moment. We are absorbed in worshipping thousands of crude deities but none

of them Christian or religious in the deep sense. We possess what the religious theologians would call the "secular mind." All our life is secular, that is irreligious in character. We are raw, blase and pagan-pagan to the core. The new-rich age like the new-rich person is apt to be that way. Our age is shiny. It is new-rich. It is materialistic. It is irreligious. It is selfish and pagan.

We are therefore a people who fear. Hunger and frustration always lead to fear. Shallow materialism always makes a man a coward, because it leaves him no inner resource which might give him courage. We fear Communism. We fear Fascism. We fear Japan. We fear Germany. We fear Russia. We fear the Soviet Union will stop fighting if they drive back the Germans to the Russian border. We fear they will keep on fighting and go to Berlin. We fear individualism. We fear bureaucracy, and we fear to be ruled. We fear ourselves and we fear our neighbors. A certain amount of fear is self-protective. It helps one to ward off possible danger. Our kind of fear saps individual spiritual vitality and leaves us cowed and defeated.

There will be dark days ahead for the human race. The tragic character of all that is happening in our lives makes this almost certain. Revolution will follow revolution. What men choose to call peace will hardly become peace for our day at least. In any event all the conflicts of life do not take place in time of war. The conflicts which are produced through individual frustration and personal defeat bring war to the human soul. They produce unhappiness. They will not give you peace or rest. Our fear does not help us to meet these conflicts. It serves to make us the victims of them.

Our fears also make us social snobs. Not certain of ourselves we are not certain of the people who live around us. We are afraid to be ourselves whether that self be joyous, serious or dramatic because we are afraid of what our neighbor may think. Every man becomes respectable which is a surface with which he coats himself, until our social world is cursed by respectability. Respectability therefore becomes just another word for fear or spiritual emptiness. It stands for a stiff soul and a cold heart. It makes a barren and humorless world. Our dull, dead respectability is just another sign of the pagan that is in us. It is a crass, unattractive enemy of the good. Cheap respectability is the mark of a darkened spiritual age. It is the expression of a man that is spiritually starved.

The Nature of Our Spiritual Starvation

All these things point to the fact that life has lost its spiritual moorings. The happy familiar landmarks of the great religious past are gone. There seem to be no new stars to guide. Our personal irreligion and individual paganism has grown so large that the religious world in a previous sense no longer exists. There is no longer any promised land. There is no longer any new Jerusalem. There is no Christendom. All that we are in religion and spiritual culture is but a fleeting phantom of a dim and forgotten past. Like a ruderless ship we lie stranded and adrift upon the vast ocean of this mortal life. And who is there to guide?

It is said that Orpheus played so sweetly upon the lyre, accompanying the music with his voice, that he tamed wild beasts, stayed the course of rivers and drew the very trees around him as he sang. Irreligion strips us of the power to tame either the beast within our own souls, or

to plot the course and direction our lives should take. We are unable to subdue darkness because there is no light within our spirits.

But it is a mark of our plight that we do not know that we lack this light. It is given to the pagan to not realize that he is a pagan. The irreligious man is attracted to the idea that he is beyond the need of religion. Having discovered a certain amount of emancipation from bad religion through his lack of religion, our pagan friend supposes he no longer needs the ministries of any religion.

If you are a pagan you will not be helped by conventional religion. The conventional is always too disturbing to the unconventional. Fixed things act as stumbling blocks to those who need fixing. Those who are in revolt against the institutional and set ways of a dead religious tradition need religion. It will have to be a religion that is fresh, creative and itself unafraid. The religiously fearful cannot help those who live in fear. A religion which has stopped having a great experience with God will not be able to guide the Godless. The religion which exists is also starved. It is hardly able to feed the hungry.

In other words the religion which exists is in part pagan. The gospel of a half-pagan Christianity is being preached from many a pulpit in the land. But the vast American multitudes are not deeply drawn to it. They do not despise Christianity. They do not hate religion. They are simply indifferent to it. Especially are they indifferent to a religious faith which is diluted to suit the taste of the half-hearted and the uninterested. Christianity would die if it depended for its ultimate survival upon the kind of loyalty which the average American community gives to it. As it is it is having a difficult

time keeping alive. In fact the present sick state of mankind stems for the most part from the sick state of religion in nations which are no longer Christian save in name. It is kept alive by the small minority everywhere who understand clearly its deeper character and need.

The Marks of Paganism

The mark of the pagan is the mark of the beast. The beast is running rampant across our world. He is wild and untamed. He knows neither God nor man. The non-spiritual man soon degenerates. Very soon he becomes ruthless and cruel as in fascism. Always he destroys life and personality under the guise of saving it. This irreligious beast lives in fascist lands and he lives in our own land. He never believes in either God or love. That is what makes him pagan.

This paganism is most marked in fascist countries. In Germany and in the nations it has conquered, this pagan man is engaged in butchering Jews and anyone else whom he does not like. Since paganism is never willing to submit its character to God, or to have its life ruled by him, it lusts after its own cruel power and builds its own little destructive scheme of things. It is lawless and wild because you can never buck the moral character of the world without becoming lawless. Because it refuses to recognize the rights of God, it cannot recognize the rights of man. Since it sets up no higher judge than itself, its laws, its order and social forms change as fast as its own judgment varies. There are no stars to guide since under fascist paganism, as under all paganism, every man does what is right in his own eyes. Contrast this with the theory of the Christian state

which says that man is endowed by God with certain inalienable rights and therefore which is bound to respect them. What God gives man cannot take away.

But we ought not to suppose that we are safe because the spirit of true religion has been written into our own constitution. A constitution after all is only as good as its people. No constitution can have force apart from common consent. As one American historian has expressed it, the people who drew up the American constitution were the kind of men of great religious and ethical character who could have made almost any constitution work. They were the kind of non-pagan individuals who founded great schools and universities in the name and under the inspiration of their religion. These schools later became pagan, many of them, and denounced the religion that mothered and gave them birth. The growth of irreligion in schools which were once religious is just another mark of the paganism of our day.

The same irreligion and selfishness which makes for fascist chaos is at work in America today. It expresses itself through the lives of selfish men who aren't willing to give a bottle of milk a day to every hottentot who needs it, or for that matter to anyone in need, if it does not suit their greedy purposes. Religious love of God makes a person love and care for his fellowmen. The mark of all irreligion is to refuse to care. It is to shout to high heaven that you do not care even if they be damned. America is also in danger of fascism because our own brand of paganism is raising up a generation of irreligious men and women who don't give a "tinker's damn" for human life, either in this world or the next.

So far this paganism in its violent forms is still in a minority in our land. But one must always remember that irreligion does not play by the rules of the game. It is willing to cheat and defraud. It will lie. It will employ violence if need be. It will do everything it can to circumvent the law in the name of law. It will destroy democracy in the name of democracy. As Huey Long once expressed it when he was asked whether fascism would come to America, "Yes, but when it comes it won't be called fascism, but anti-fascism." This political irreligion will seek to establish itself by fair means or foul. It is well to remember that fascism in Germany did not establish itself by common consent but through the unscrupulous intrigue of an unprincipled and irreligious minority. Such a minority of the irreligious is to be found in every nation. Not only is it present among us but its tribe is on the increase.

Such a minority could not flourish long in any land much less hope for ultimate success, if it did not have support from a similarly pagan and indifferent people. How does the pagan character of our people aid this more pagan minority? They are aided because we create for them a spiritual climate in which they feel at home, and in which they do not feel strange to us.

For example, this kind of irreligion feeds upon self-satisfaction and the irreligious are always self-satisfied. They lack that kind of spiritually sensitive conscience which the truly religious possess which makes them dissatisfied with the wrong and injustices in life about them. Indifference or self-satisfaction makes a wonderful soil for the pagan fascist to till. He dotes upon that kind of climate.

Our Pagan Fascists

American fascism is more latent than open. It is budding rather than full grown. The lack of religious life is its first stage. The other stages come later unless the first stage is dispersed. When we talk of our own pagan fascists then we are not using the words in a Nazi sense. We are speaking of a condition capable of being nazified if not checked by the power of religious faith and its spiritual vitality. To understand our state let us ask, who are our budding pagan fascists?

First, are all those who hate. A man whose life is filled with hate is already a fascist in his heart. The difference between the American who hates all Jews and the German who slaughters them is only a difference in degree, not kind. Deep down the character is essentially the same. The life of both is built upon prejudice and irreligion. For it belongs to the precepts of all great religions to hate evil, but never to hate people. Hatred of men and women of whatever race is the beginning of fascism. It is the sign of irreligion. The religious man loves God. And we are rightly told that he who loves God cannot hate his neighbor. He may not like the things he does, but he dare not hate him. All hatred breeds those diseases in human life which give rise to the fascist mentality. All haters are sprouting Nazis!

Another group of budding fascists are those irreligious men and women who seek profits for themselves without counting the possible costs in human life. They are those, who whether they belong to the group called capital or labor, are willing to exploit people for money purposes. This group includes the labor racketeer and the greedy employer who would rather sell on the black market

for money than to cooperate with the government for freedom. The profiteer, and America has thousands of them, does not hesitate to traffic in human life, even at its possible destruction, providing there is money in it. His love of money makes him the root of all evil, including the evil of fascism. If America ever really goes fascist, he will be responsible. His is the arch-apostasy — the great irreligion of which there is no greater.

The materialistic intellectual is another potential fascist, for he too is pagan at heart and is not willing to pay a large price for human values. He will not pay that price because not believing in a God who values human life, ultimately he comes to doubt that man should give a high value to it. Because they do not believe that life has any great purpose or destiny, or even source that is good, they soon cease to care about working for such a destiny. Since they are materialistic at heart in their philosophy about life, they do not fear, and therefore will not strive hard against those pagan elements in life which work against life's spiritual meaning. And the foremost element in life which wars against its spiritual meaning is fascism. Therefore the materialistic intellectual will never fight fascism with any great heart or depth of inner conviction. If you do not believe that life has meaning, you will make no struggle to preserve its meaning.

Next, all state-worshippers are pagans and potential fascists. The state has its rightful place. That place must be respected. There can be no civilization or peace apart from power. But that power must be responsible. It cannot be worshiped for its own sake alone. All who think that social salvation rests in the state alone are state-worshippers. State

worshippers believe that the state can solve everything. The individual does not count or is secondary. The state-worshippers will be dealt with later in this book more fully. But his thinking is to be feared for he too is a forerunner of fascism. His God is Caesar.

The issue of state worship goes beyond battleships and airplanes. It goes beyond the reasoned right of a nation to preserve its existence from invasion and tyranny. It goes beyond tax-bills and laws. It includes the need for economic security but goes beyond providing three square meals a day and a car in every garage. State-worship is the problem of God and the kind of God that must be worshiped. Its irreligion is that of worshiping a false God. Since the God it worships is fraudulent, sooner or later he betrays its devotee to fascism. For the God of the state will not protect the rights of an individual, unless he is opposed by the God of true religion who really cares for human beings.

The early centuries of Christian history produced a long line of Christian martyrs, whose names have been preserved for us, but whose deeds remain unsung. Each one could have saved his own life by burning a little incense and by saying that Caesar was God. Each refused to worship the state. There was, for example, one Polycarp. The Roman authorities tried to induce him to worship the Emperor. They asked him what harm there could be in doing so. He refused in no uncertain language, "Eighty-six years have I served him and he did me no wrong, how can I blaspheme my King who saved me?" Our own American state-worshippers and their pagan worship of false Gods may yet betray us into fascism, even if unwittingly.

An Abraham Lincoln or a Jeremiah did not flourish in a stone age. Agricultural civilizations, as many writers have pointed out, have generally been more religious than industrial. Personality has its greatest chance whenever dependence upon God is greatest. If the individual depends upon the machine or the state, and not upon God, in time the fair flower of personality is degraded as in fascist lands. Human rights were born in the dawn of the human race's belief in a good God. Any material or intellectual rot which accepts a lesser belief subjects the individual to ruin and exploitation.

The secular mind constitutes the final fascist threat to our age. It is a part of all the other groups that we have mentioned, but it includes others who have not been classified thus far. It includes the indifferent, the cynical and the disillusioned to religious truth. It takes in a very large number of average men and women, at least in some degree, for our stage of disillusionment or cynicism or indifference to religion varies. These three secular characteristics may be said to form the character of the pagan mind, which mind creates the soil and climate out of which fascism springs.

Secular people usually feel it to be a mark of maturity or wisdom to ignore the religion of the Church, or any religion. They are sufficiently satisfied, or skeptical or despairing to fail to see how any religious practice can help them. Perhaps, they feel, it may help weaker souls. But they are beyond its need. The spiritual rivers of living water flowing for centuries upon centuries out of the heart of God, purifying and cleansing human motives and passions, cannot make them clean. They cannot through them make clean the world, because they

will not drink from their life-giving force. Hostile, ignorant or indifferent to religious values, or plainly disillusioned because they have not been made to work in their own case—it does not matter which. All secularists by their irreligion prevent that divine cleansing of human life which in the end is life's only way of preventing itself from becoming the victim of the worst evils prone to afflict the human race.

In fact, it was discovered that a secular England could not even find the staff to man the hospitals and other institutions which a religious England had earlier created. Today our American Churches, vexed by the same kind of secularism, cannot now fill the large but empty Churches which a religious America once built. The life which flowed out of these

same Churches into many kinds of social good will one day have to renew itself at their altars, or one has little hesitation in believing that we too may not escape those same forms of cruelty in life which more pagan countries have suffered.

The spiritual need of our modern age is the need for God. Our mechanized power may protect our right to His worship, but it is helpless to give Him to us. He can be found only by those who seek Him. Those who deride or scorn Him have lost Him, and for that matter they will lose life. No blue print will save them, however fine. We may try other kinds of power. We can follow other paths. Soon, if not late, we must come to Him. He is our only shield. He is life's right. He is the right and the good we seek.



OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Karl Lowith is professor in Hartford Theological Seminary.

Ronald Preston is the new study secretary of the British Student Christian movement. He succeeds Alan Richardson in this post. The latter has become Canon in Durham. Mr. Preston also succeeds Mr. Richardson as our British representative. We have a small but loyal group of British subscribers. In the future Mr. Preston will handle all matters pertaining to British subscriptions.

Alexander Miller is editor of "The Presbyterian" a significant new British religious journal. He is connected with

George McLoud in the development of the famous "Iona Community" one of the most significant experiments in social Christianity in the church of Scotland.

We welcome both Mr. Preston and Mr. Miller to our columns in this issue and hope that they will frequently interpret religious and political life in Britain to us. Both are very representative and significant leaders in British religious life.

Ralph Read is pastor of the Wyoming Community Church and a charter member of the Fellowship.

Eduard Heimann and Clifford Stanley are regular contributors as well as contributing editors of this journal.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE RIGHTS OF MAN AND NATURAL LAW, by Jacques Maritain. pp. 118. New York, Scribner's, 1943. \$1.50.

To this reviewer's limited knowledge, whatever may be Maritain's merits as a philosopher, there is no one today who speaks with such a richness of human understanding, such a width of tolerance, despite his own precise and determined standards, with such a radiant goodness and nobility of the heart as does Jacques Maritain. The present beautiful little book, admirably translated, lives up to what one is entitled to expect of him. Nowhere can one find a clearer and more convincing presentation of the dialectical relationship between the human person and the society of persons, the person being driven, in his innate search for perfection, into fellowship and friendship and organized communal life but also beyond them; society may demand of him, after having given him education in mathematics, to teach mathematics, but has no jurisdiction over the mathematical truth that he finds himself in conscience bound to teach. Maritain distinguishes four essential characteristics of the good society: it is personalist, communal, pluralist, and Christian. This brings us to the admirable treatment of the controversial question as to what is a Christian society. He sees the danger of clericalism as we see it, and as, T. S. Eliot does not see it: as a "decoratively Christian system" imposing on society, by privileges and compulsion, certain external appearances of Christianity with a view to strengthening the power of the existing order. But he is not afraid, on

the other hand, of demanding a state which is conscious of the source which inspires its morality. For the truth must have precedence over error, and the spiritual mission of the Christian Church must be supported. But this, again, can least of all be done by establishment—stipends from the state to the clergy are rejected because they always lead to a confusion between the supernatural common good and the temporal common good of the faithful of one Christian church and leads to "that corruption of the church which is worse than persecution." Thus speaks a French Catholic.

So his mind is also open to the Christian idea of progress, which has been perverted into an anti-Christian doctrine, into something automatic and material, but which, for a very long-range survey, means the slow and often retarded growth of human freedom and the "brotherly city," in which the law of justice and the "virtue of friendship" are cherished. More generally, the rights of man, which appear, in their French rather than in their American form, as anti-Christian—partly because of the corruption of Christian life in the ancien regime—are re-integrated into a spiritual Christian understanding of man, from which they sprang and which alone can safeguard them against that degeneration into anarchy which is the forefruit of totalitarianism.

That the philosophical foundation of all this in the doctrine of the natural law may be questioned from other points of view is clear. But it should be recognized that there is nothing static in his conception, as can best be seen from the catalogue of the rights of man which Mari-

tain discusses and which include, among many other things, equal suffrage, freedom of speech and association, equal employment opportunities in the professions, and the whole list of the rights of the working person which alone can humanize modern industry. What particularly concerns us is his belief that, at least in England and in Fighting France, both socialists and Christians are in the process of revising and renewing their social concepts and getting nearer to one another. The socialists qualify their mechanistic idea of collectivism under a state which plans everything and replaces it by the idea of an associative organization; the Christians revise their formulas of paternalism and corporatism; and both appear to the author to converge on a pluralist conception of society with a distinctly limited sovereignty of the state even in domestic, let alone in international matters.

Eduard Heimann.

U. S. FOREIGN POLICY: SHIELD OF THE REPUBLIC, by Walter Lippman, Boston, Little, Brown and Co. 1943. pp. 177. \$1.50.

This book deserves its sensational success—315,000 copies sold in four weeks—by its brilliant clarity; it is a highly useful textbook in the technique of international policy. Its leitmotif is the proposition that we do not have what deserves to be called an international policy unless our commitments, to be defended if necessary by war, are balanced by the military power and the alliances we can muster for this end. A historical survey shows that we did have a foreign policy from the promulgation of the Monroe doctrine on to the acquisition of the Spanish colonies in Asia. For the Monroe doctrine rested on an explicit under-

standing with the British that their navy would bar any potential aggressor from approaching the nations from Greenland down to the bulge of Brazil and Patagonia. Lippman makes much of the fact that, because this understanding with England was never given, for secondary reasons, the explicit form of an alliance, the ruinous misapprehension could develop that we had never had "entangling alliances." In point of fact we had never been without them; we had not won our independence single-handed but in a global war with the indirect aid of France and occasionally of Spain, Holland and Russia.

The acquisition of the Philippines added a commitment 7,000 miles away. This could not fail to invite aggression, particularly since we insisted on disarming our friends. At Pearl Harbor the bankruptcy of our foreign policy, which President Roosevelt could not redress in the short span of a few years against the apathy and ignorance of a people reared in illusions, became visible to all. Our own future security and that of world peace demanded that the present coalition be perpetuated and the problems which might divide our camp be solved.

So far so good. It is perfectly legitimate, and badly needed, to talk of the material of foreign policy in terms of geopolitics, (as the late Professor Spykman has done in his monumental work, "America's Strategy In World Politics".) But this does not mean that the geopolitician can be our guide, just as little as the military or diplomatic expert can be. Technique is essential in any art, including that of the statesman, but must not be substituted for the art. Lippman repeatedly quotes Washington's advice "to choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel" and the

opinion of Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe that Britain, in backing our Monroe doctrine, chose "between despotism and liberty," but the words justice and liberty occur only in these quotations and quotation marks. It is not until the last seven pages of the book are reached that the author remembers any spiritual principles of international policy. He argues that the coalition of the three or four great powers required to honor the commitment of world peace can be preserved only if they religiously respect the liberties of the smaller peoples; if they did not they would immediately become rivals and adversaries.

Now first, the argument remains somewhat sketchy, it is not elaborated as it demands to be. (The reader may be usefully referred, for the growing organizations of the United Nations, to the booklet by Henri Bonnet, the Commissar for Information in the new French provisional government, "Outlines Of The Future World Organization Emerging From The War," Chicago, World Citizens Association; and for the problems to be solved in the camp of the United Nations to my pamphlet, "Liberty Through Power. A Study Of The United Nations." Union for Democratic action.) In particular, Lippman does not permit himself the luxury of a discussion of the historical nature of Europe or of a vision of a possible European future. The reasons for these strange defects of the book are quite clear. In his commendable ambition to find a ground on which to unite the American people for its foreign policy, he establishes his purely technical principle that commitments and power must be equal. Agreement on technical matters is relatively easy to obtain, and this special principle is by no means trivial.

One may well argue that unbalanced commitments are immoral because they mislead others and ourselves. But while this is important, it is not enough. Why must there be, e.g., a "commitment" 7,000 miles away? There cannot be a purely formal answer to this question, and Mr. Lippman gives no material answer. As soon as he would introduce spiritual criteria he would disrupt the unity of the nation which, he believes, his purely technical reasoning secures. That is why the principles of liberty and justice, when they at last appear, do not appear as ends in themselves, but as supplementary technical principles, as elements in the necessary combination of power. They must be degraded to the technical level in order to be acceptable without dissension. Does Lippman really believe that this logical trick can evade the spiritual decisions that are demanded of politics? And is it wise to teach politics as if it were a purely technical discipline?

Eduard Heimann.

CAPITALISM, SOCIALISM, AND DEMOCRACY, by Joseph A. Schumpeter. Harper's, 1942. pp. 381. \$3.50.

This is a strange book. The first half is what one would expect of the author, who is one of the really great economists of this as of any age. Its real significance lies in the chapters which give the best possible defense to capitalism, and a challenge to all critics of capitalism. The author rightly measures capitalism against the yardstick of its achievement, an increase of the output of consumption goods by roughly 2 percent a year over the period from the Civil War down to the great depression. He sees no reason to doubt that capitalism could continue at the same pace; particularly the great

depression must not be overrated since there have been depressions of similar severity in the past without in the long run affecting that average rate of growth. (The only weak spot in this argument is the argument which is supposed to prove that even with decreasing birth rates capitalism would not lack sufficient opportunities for capital investments in the future, corresponding to those in the past.) His defense of monopoly is particularly emphatic: in a stationary system monopoly would be a real handicap on production; in a rapidly shifting system, however, it is the only way for progressive business to keep its feet on the ground. Nor can one refer to the adverse effects of a deteriorating income distribution for proof that capitalism, however productive, does not benefit the mass of the people; all statistics prove that the income distribution shows a remarkable percentual stability in all countries throughout boom and depression. The author makes somewhat light shift of unemployment; he admits that it cannot well be abolished in dynamic capitalism but insists that, if capitalism with its 2 percent annual increase of consumption were permitted to continue its operation for another fifty years, poverty would be abolished even for the unemployed.

It is very strange that an author, with these views, does not advise us to preserve capitalism. He devotes some highly appreciative and readable chapters to Marx's scholarly performances and fully agrees with him that capitalism is done for; only while Marx insists on the economic inoperativeness of capitalism, he regards it as doomed for reasons of its social climate, for which capitalism itself bears much of the responsibility. Its original drive and spontaneity gives way

to organized research and bureaucratization. Its principal motive used to be the egoism of the family; it dries up as the conveniences of that rationalism which capitalism preaches spread to all spheres of life. Capitalism needs a critical, rational approach and thus rears an intelligentsia whose business is criticism and which necessarily turns its guns on the existing order; that is, capitalism. Thus capitalism undermines its own strength and nourishes its enemies—a proposition parallel to that of Marx.

The alternative, socialism, is perfectly capable of economic operation, contrary to a widespread academic and popular prejudice, according to our author, and would benefit society by the removal of many handicaps which beset capitalism, such as the struggle of business with the state. We are far advanced, in this age of "fettered capitalism," on the road to socialism, and there is no reason why a peaceful transition should not be feasible, provided it is really intended. All this is most brilliantly presented, but somewhat without a point.

What the author is driving at in the later sections of his book becomes more and more unintelligible. Moreover, for all their conspicuous display of erudition, these sections are distinctly poor on fundamentals. The author is very proud of a "mental experiment" to which he invites the reader, to prove that democracy, contrary to its classical theory, is not identical with the common good. Witch-burning and lynching for instance are popular but not in line with the common good. In other words, he has never heard that democracy springs from religion and originally postulates the fear of God as its foundation precisely because man is not the incorporation of the good. Nor does he seem to have heard of the

division of powers as an institutional check on the whims of the sovereign people; he uses as his example of democracy exclusively the British form of parliamentarism. The theory of democracy to which he adheres is that of government by those who win the competitive struggle for the people's votes. This is Max Weber's understanding of democracy and well-known everywhere; the author seems to regard it as his own discovery. What is worse, he regards it as an adequate foundation on which to rest an inquiry into whether the democratic claims of socialism are capable of fulfillment. Naturally he comes to the conclusion that there is neither a positive nor a negative correlation between socialism and this aspect of democracy; they may but need not go hand in hand. But does he really believe that this democracy is the thing meant in socialism? Or, for that matter, in democracy? Has he never heard—or read, for instance in Marx, not to mention Peguy—that the goal is a transformation of the climate which pervades the cells of society? And whom does he then want to interest in his discussion? It is significant of the futility of his final chapters that the word fascism, in a bulky volume on the pressing problems of our day, occurs only once, in the second-to-the-last line of the book. The reader should explicitly be warned not to let this glaring failure stand in the way of his studying the first half of the book as seriously as possible.

Eduard Heimann.

FREEDOM OF THE SOUL, by

Dwight J. Bradley. Associated Press.

Fleming H. Revell Company. New York. 1943. \$1.50.

This book has the merit of recognizing that the difficulties of our day point to

some crisis of the spirit and not simply to a disorganization of external factors. Our complicated society has unclothed our inadequacy and the author calls for an inwardness and maturity of individuality in a manner reminiscent of Kierkegaard. Another way of stating our problem, according to the author, is to say that the heritage of the Reformation and of the Renaissance have become separated. The need therefore is to bring the "rational and esthetic liberty" of the one together with the "religious and ethical discipline" of the other. These sentences suggest why this book stands on a higher plane than many of the volumes dealing with the current situation. First, it realizes that the improvement of things is contingent not only on a rearrangement of factors in the outer world but on some change wrought in the spirit of man. Second, the writer possesses historical perspective and understands that the situation today is related closely to the developments of the centuries just completed.

While the writer recognizes that the critical problem is in man himself and not in the world outside of man, does he realize the true profundity of that problem? Take a number of examples. When he deals with God (p. 50), God is uncertain, whereas man's conduct is the really certain datum. Does not profound religion begin with God as its prime certainty and call man in question? Again, when he speaks of sin (p. 61), he speaks of it as the "ineradicable egoism" of man. Profound religion would say that empirical egoism is the result of man's revolt against God. Bradley may believe this, but he does not say it. It is not the kind of statement that can be taken for granted. The same question reappears when the writer speaks of re-

demption. He says it is a "matter of intellectual, emotional and moral dynamics" (p. 41). Profound religion would say that redemption is the overcoming of man's revolt against God by God Himself. A consequence of this, or perhaps the outers side of it, is the cleansing of man's "intellectual, emotional and moral dynamics." Here again, unless this is stated explicitly, it leaves the writer open to a charge of too much humanism. The author desires with sincerity a national awakening. But no awakening will take us far unless it is seen that the chief root of our ills is our humanism and secularity.

There is a concrete point or two that are deserving of comment. The writer speaks of Russia and America as "the strongholds of modern democracy" (p. 98). There may be economic democracy in Russia but is there political democracy there? Do the western democracies not need to exercise a leavening influence upon Russia in that respect, while Russia at the same time serves to influence them toward a more liberal economy? Is not Britain, much more than Russia, a "stronghold of modern democracy"? And while we are on the subject of Britain, it ought to be said that if America does collaborate with Russia after the war it will be due in no small degree to the mediating role of Great Britain.

Clifford L. Stanley.

TOWARDS AN ABIDING PEACE,

by R. M. McIver, MacMillans. \$2.50.

This outline of a peace settlement by one of America's ablest political scientists is a good example of the weakness of the

rationalist approach to political and international issues. Professor McIver has spent a lifetime in fruitful study of political and social history. Yet he thinks about world problems in purely abstract terms.

He wants to erect a world federation which will have control of such world gates as the Panama Canal, the Suez Canal, Gibraltar and the Dardenelles. These all "belong in plain equity to the world." Great Britain would turn over her colonies to international control and many boundaries would be rectified according to abstract conceptions of justice but not according to political possibilities. The international federation would function through an assembly in which a three-fifth majority would prevail. It is not quite apparent how the nations would be persuaded to cede their sovereignty over to this international authority.

One wishes that one could define justice between nations without relation to the fact that there are victors and vanquished; and that one could give every nation, no matter what its size, the same authority in a world federation. But if that is done power and authority would become even more incommensurate than they were in the late League of Nations. Political life in general and the coalescence of power and authority in particular, simply do not follow the simple rational patterns which Professor McIver assign to them. If life were as rational as that one might define an even more perfect world society than he has done. But it will all remain merely upon paper and have little relevance to actual history.

R. N.